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NEWS WORTH SHARING.

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An inside look at development, the economy, recreation and more.



WHEN HALI FREEZES OVER

Pedestrians make their way down Spring Garden Road, as seen through a frozen-over bus shelter on Monday. Halifax received snow, rain, flooding and a flash freeze on Sunday which has had a major impact on travelling in our region. More coverage, pages 6 & 7. JEFF HARPER/METRO

'Continue with our lives'

Conspiracy to commit murder. Two accused in Valentine's Day plot due in court Tuesday



HALEY RYAN

haley.ryan@metronews.ca

As many Halifax residents head back to work after a weekend of shocking details around what police are calling a mass-murder plot, Jean-Michel Blais says the best way to counter fear is to continue on with our normal lives.

The chief of Halifax Regional Police said Monday he and his team are "absolutely relieved" a Valentine's Day shooting allegedly planned for the Halifax Shopping Centre did not happen, and charges have been laid against two people.

"Continue with our lives, and show that the caring that we have for one another and for our community is a lot stronger than their hate," Blais said.

Investigators received information through a Crime Stoppers tip from a Canadian

source that a Timberlea man and a U.S. woman had access to firearms and were intending to go to a public venue on Valentine's Day and open fire, killing citizens and then themselves.

Lindsay Kantha Souvanarath of Geneva, Ill., 23, and 20-year-old Randall Steven Shepherd of Halifax face charges of conspiracy to commit murder, and are due in Halifax provincial court Tuesday morning.

A 19-year-old man was found dead in a Timberlea residence Friday morning where three long-barrelled rifles were later seized.

Some published reports have identified him as Jamie Gamble, 19.

Blais said he knows there has been speculation around the suspects in this case, and whether their alleged plans could have been idle threats.

"From the indications we have thus far ... they fully had the intention, and they had the ability, to carry out this mass murder," Blais said.

WITH FILES FROM THE CANADIAN PRESS

More coverage, pages 3, 4 & 5



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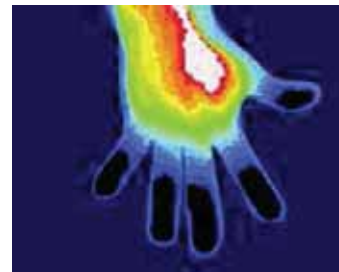
Based on the research of Dr. Nathan S. Bryan, PhD, who lectures to doctors around the world about Nitric Oxide, Neogenis® Labs has created a revolutionary lozenge, called Neo 40 daily, that makes it easy to restore N-O levels. This "fast-dissolve" lozenge restores your N-O to youthful levels by dissolving within 90 seconds and begins to work immediately, which leads to better circulation, for many in as little as 20 minutes.

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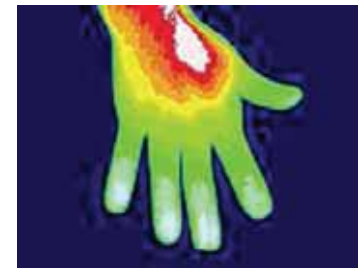
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Actual Thermographic Image of Hand shows circulation in hands before and after taking Neo 40 daily. On the Left, the fingertips are almost black showing little blood flow. On the Right, lighter colored fingers show increased blood flow after only 20 minutes.

A boost in Nitric Oxide levels may equal increased sexual sensitivity for men and women. Tammy from Ontario said, "The first night after my first dose I had improved circulation in my hands. I find the increased circulation is a definite benefit in the bedroom." "We noticed a difference in my husband's erections within a week. We can't believe how well it works," reports pleased wife Marion S., of New York.

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We've learned it can happen in Halifax

Threat. An alleged foiled mass shooting plot in Halifax could have been devastating, and is an eye-opener for everyone



HALIFAX MATTERS
Stephen Kimber

It can't happen here.

It won't happen here.

It — almost — did.

But what is "it"? And how do we protect ourselves against whatever it is?

On Friday night, I was at Scotiabank Centre enjoying the Halifax Mooseheads-Shawinigan Cataractes Quebec Major Junior Hockey League game.

During another commercial lull — the game was televised nationally during Hockey Day in Canada — I flipped open my Twitter stream: "#Halifax police say they have foiled mass-shooting plot ..."

Halifax?

New York ... Paris ... even Ottawa.

But Halifax?

Police say three people — a 23-year-old woman from suburbia, Illinois, and two young men from middle-class Halifax — had plotted to "kill citizens, and then themselves" at the Halifax Shopping Centre on Valentine's Day.

Who? Why?

Those questions are still



Halifax Regional Police Chief Jean-Michel Blais, right, and RCMP Asst. Commissioner Brian Brennan speak at a news conference regarding an alleged foiled mass murder plan in Halifax on Saturday. ANDREW VAUGHAN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Quoted

Is someone who commits mass murder for thrills a terrorist? Was Justin Bourque, who targeted police for twisted ideological reasons, a terrorist? Or should we save our use of that word for Al Qaeda, ISIL militants and Timothy McVeigh ...?

open. We've been told the three shared a fascination with mass murder — including the 1999 Columbine school shootings — Nazis and Adolf Hitler, and hung out in online mayhem chat spaces.

Does that make them terrorists?

The police say no. An RCMP

spokesperson told reporters he would classify the plot "as a group of individuals that had some beliefs and were willing to carry out violent acts against citizens," but their beliefs were "not culturally based."

That predictably lit up the Twittersphere. Is there a double

standard? Muslims are terrorists, while white suburban kids may be "murderous misfits" (in our grandstanding Justice Minister Peter MacKay's inappropriate turn of phrase), but not terrorists.

Canada's Criminal Code defines a terrorist act as being "in whole or in part for a political, religious or ideological purpose, objective or cause ... with the intention of intimidating the public."

Is someone who commits mass murder for thrills a terrorist? Was Justin Bourque, who targeted police for twisted ideological reasons, a terrorist? Or should we save our use of that word for

Al Qaeda, ISIL militants and Timothy McVeigh, those with not only malice aforethought but also "grander" visions than death in a blaze of glory?

How then to categorize Michael Zehaf Bibeau, whose Parliament Hill shooting spree seemed inspired by a poisonous cocktail of ideology and mental illness?

The answers matter, for how we classify these crimes, for what kind of laws we need to combat them.

Today, we simply say thank you to whoever tipped off police, and to the police for reacting quickly and effectively to prevent a tragedy.

Because it can happen here.

1 NEWS

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Tip most significant ever: Crime Stoppers

Alleged shooting plot.

Organization won't disclose who exactly tipped off police

The head of Crime Stoppers in Canada says the tip regarding the alleged mall shooting plot in Halifax was likely the most significant ever received in this country for a police investigation.

Ralph Page, president of the Canadian Crime Stoppers Association, said it is an indication of the organization's role in crime prevention.

Police in Halifax have charged two people with conspiracy to commit murder in connection with an alleged plan to carry out an attack at the Halifax Shopping Centre on Valentine's Day. The suspects are due to appear in court on Tuesday to face the allegations against them.

Police had no advance warning of the alleged plans other than an anonymous tip, said RCMP Asst. Commissioner Brian Brennan.

"This investigation started immediately after that single Crime Stoppers tip came in," he told reporters.

Police have said the tip

Quoted

"It's kind of a tribute to the Crime Stoppers programs that the awareness level is high enough out in the community for people to think of them and in this particular case save a horrible thing from happening."

Ralph Page, president of the Canadian Crime Stoppers Association

came from within Canada, but have not said anything more specific due to the anonymous nature of the Crime Stoppers system.

"Anonymity is basically what we sell, what people trust. So we protect that at all costs," said Page.

There are more than 100 local Crime Stoppers programs across Canada, said Page, and each is a charity operated by volunteers.

Page said every program guarantees the anonymity of the person submitting the tip, whether by phone or through an encrypted online submission.

Crime Stoppers began in the United States in 1976



A house is seen on Tiger Maple Drive in Timberlea, where police found a deceased person early Friday. The 19-year-old dead man is believed to be one of several suspects in an alleged mass shooting plot. ANDREW VAUGHAN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

to help local police departments solve crimes by receiving anonymous tips.

In Canada, tips submitted through the program have helped lead to more than 190,000 arrests, according

to the Canadian Crime Stoppers Association website.

Over time, the role of Crime Stoppers has expanded from aiding in crime-solving to also aiding in crime prevention, said Page.

"I think the thing that happened in Halifax is probably the most significant tip that we've ever taken in Canada in terms of our vision of trying to prevent crime," said Page. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**

A closer look

Legal distinction between terrorists and criminals 'hazy,' experts say

When authorities revealed the stunning news of an alleged plot to attack a Halifax shopping mall, both police and federal Justice Minister Peter MacKay stressed it wasn't a terrorist plot.

MacKay told reporters at a news conference on Saturday that the alleged plan appeared to be the product of a "group of murderous misfits" prepared to "wreak havoc and mayhem on our community."

Police said they would not define the suspects as an alleged terrorist group, saying there is no evidence they are linked by ideology or culture or that they have any connections to a terrorist organization. So, how has it come about that an allegation of plotting to cause mass murder in a public place is not an allegation of terrorism?

Defining terrorism is a complex task, one that has preoccupied governments since the Sept. 11 attacks on New York and Washington, experts say. And with Prime Minister Stephen Harper's new anti-terror bill before Parliament, taking a closer look at the Canadian definition is all the more crucial.

"The problem of defining terrorism has been a thorny one from the get-go," said terrorism expert John Thompson, vice-president of Strategic Capital and Intelligence Group.

"Terrorism overlaps with so many other activities. When does a violent protest become terrorism? When does some sort of psychotic episode where someone is acting out become terrorism? It's a very hazy border."

In Canada, section 83.01 of the Criminal Code defines terrorism as an act committed "in whole or in part for a political, religious or ideological purpose, objective or cause" with the intention of intimidating the public's security or compelling a person, government or organization to do or refrain from doing an act.

Thompson said this definition was intentionally general and open to interpretation, but the key element is a political or ideological motivation.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Reaction from mayor, police chief, others

"What I can tell you is that this appeared to be a group of murderous misfits that were coming here or were living here and prepared to wreak havoc and mayhem on our community."

— Justice Minister Peter MacKay

"Recognizing our citizens may be anxious in the wake of this news, we have additional high visibility patrols in and around the city. We encourage people to go about their daily lives."

— Halifax Regional Police Chief Jean-Michel Blais

"On behalf of all Nova Scotians, I thank our police officials, here and in the United States, for their quick and professional work. We are grate-



Justice Minister Peter MacKay
ANDREW VAUGHAN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

ful for their dedication and vigilance."

— Premier Stephen McNeil

"Thank you to @HfxRegPolice and @RCMPNS for your exemplary work in protecting Hfx residents. A city is grateful."

— Halifax Mayor Mike Savage, via Twitter



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Residents 'horrified' by news of mass-killing plot

Public reaction. Some in disbelief, others' thoughts turn to Moncton shootings

After hearing that a group of people were allegedly plotting to walk into a public venue in Halifax on Saturday and open fire on citizens, residents were in utter shock.

"I was horrified and shocked and really disbelieving that something like that could happen here," said one female resident, who didn't want to disclose her name, while standing on Spring Garden Road on Saturday.

"It was really, really frightening — really terrifying that something like that could have been in the works, here, where I live."

Police have since charged a 23-year-old woman and a 20-year-old man with conspiracy to commit murder in the

case, before releasing another 17-year-old suspect from police custody.

Craig Killen, who was visiting the city from Riverview, N.B., for a weekend getaway, said that when he heard the news of the deadly plot, his first thoughts were of the Moncton shootings last June, where three RCMP officers were killed by gunman Justin Bourque.

"All the things that have been going on in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia in the last year, enough is enough," he said.

Others, such as student Jared Farr, who were walking about the streets of downtown, admitted they felt a bit more on edge after learning that a plot may have been brewing.

"Hearing yesterday that there was something planned for today really struck a bit of fear into me," he said.

"Overall, I'm just grateful for our police force," said Yuri Yurive of Sackville.

STEPHANIE TAYLOR/METRO



Police search in a snow squall Friday in Cole Harbour for a suspect in an alleged mass-murder plan. DARRELL OAKE/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Accused plotter never spoke of guns: Friend

A man who went to rock shows with one of the young men alleged to have been planning a Valentine's Day shooting at a Halifax mall says his acquaintance never spoke of guns to him.

Call centre worker Vincent Appleton said he was friends with Randall Steven Shepherd, 20, who was charged Saturday with conspiracy to commit murder.

Shepherd never mentioned firearms, said Appleton.

"It throws you back a little bit. It gives you pause," said the 35-year-old, who had planned to spend Saturday morning at the Halifax Shopping Centre, where police allege the attack was to take place.

Lindsay Kantha Souvanarath, 23, of Geneva, Ill., has also been charged with conspiracy to commit murder. And police found a 19-year-old suspect dead in a house in suburban Timberlea on Friday.

The identity of the deceased suspect has not been released by police, but some published reports have put a name to the 19-year-old.

Appleton said he was

American charged

Police in Geneva, Illinois, just west of Chicago, say they searched Lindsay Souvanarath's home Friday night and seized several items.

friends with the young person named in those reports, as well as Shepherd, and that he went to rock shows with them and had them over for a few beers at his apartment.

A social networking website believed to be linked to the deceased 19-year-old features pictures of weapons, Nazi symbols and images relating to the Columbine school shooting. Other pictures on the social media site show the young man posing with a rifle and a knife.

On Feb. 5, an image circulated on another account featuring the 19-year-old's username and the phrase: "Valentine's Day it's going down."

Appleton said Shepherd had appeared to him to be a "happy guy," who was "rocking out his hair at the bar."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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'A lot of slippery roads' ahead for Halifax due to icy conditions

Weather. Cold temps expected for the rest of the week, keeping salting from effectively doing its job



HALEY RYAN
haley.ryan@metronews.ca

It will be a "tough week" for the Halifax region, as the current layer of ice covering the roads and sidewalks will likely stick around in the coming days, said Halifax's winter operations superintendent Darrin Natolino.

On Sunday, heavy rain after a snowfall caused flooding in many parts of the municipality as catch basins backed up with slush that iced over.

Although Priority 1 roads and some Priority 2 were cleared of snow by Monday, everything had frozen when the temperature dropped, and those cold temperatures are expected for the rest of the week — preventing salt from working at its best, said Natolino.

"Salting is pretty much ineffective to use it as a de-icer, so we have to use traction sand,"

Quoted

"The most help right now we need is from Mother Nature."

Darrin Natolino, Halifax winter operations superintendent

Natolino said Monday. "We'll have to keep treating that surface and hopefully get it to a point where it's passable."

Natolino said salt could work at -10 C as long as the sun beats down on the roads for a few hours to warm up the pavement, but anything above -5 C would be much more effective.

The city said in a release that snow-removal efforts will continue night and day throughout this week as crews focus on cutting down snow banks, clearing bus stops and crosswalks, and focus on areas with poor visibility.

The reality is the Halifax region will be dealing with "a lot of slippery roads" over the next week or two, Natolino said, and he is encouraging all residents to check in on neighbours and seniors who haven't been able to get outdoors over the long weekend.

"With the weather we



A plow works at pushing back the snowbanks on Spring Garden Road on Monday. JEFF HARPER/METRO

have and the condition on the roads, there's really not much that can be done to make everything go away and be perfect overnight," Natolino said, adding the encourage-

ment to limit travelling for 24 to 36 hours after the storm was made a lot easier thanks to the Heritage Day holiday on Monday, which allowed crews to work faster with fewer cars

and pedestrians around.

Although the city asked residents to clear any catch basins in their area on Sunday to help the flooding issues, Natolino said that, with no

rain in the forecast, that is no longer as pressing.

"It'll be a tough week.... In challenging times like this we need to band together," he said.

By the numbers

Snowfall amounts across the Maritimes for Sunday, in centimetres, according to Environment Canada:

Halifax

28

Greenwood

52

Yarmouth

42

Amherst

65 (volunteer observation)

Truro

38 (volunteer observation)

Charlottetown

72

Moncton

55

Saint John

33



People brave a blizzard in downtown Charlottetown on Sunday.

ANDREW VAUGHAN/THE CANADIAN PRESS



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Wheelchair users shovel walks because no one else is doing it

Accessibility.

Uncleared sidewalks driving people with disabilities to extremes



STEPHANIE TAYLOR

stephanie.taylor@metronews.ca

Sidewalks piled with snow and ice prove hazardous for residents with physical disabilities every winter, but conditions in Halifax have gotten treacherous enough this year that at least two wheelchair users are taking matters into their own hands.

Local photographer Paul Vienneau spent five hours last week shovelling a path from the sidewalk to a crosswalk after two weeks of being unable to leave his downtown home because of ice-crusted sidewalks and crosswalks.



Paul Vienneau spent five hours shovelling a path to a crosswalk. JEFF HARPER/METRO

"I can't work. I can't go on a date. I can't see friends or family or do anything that people take for granted like buying food, paying phone

bills, et cetera," he said during a recent interview.

Vienneau said he's grown increasingly lonely and isolated after being confined to his

home for almost two straight weeks, and had to cancel several photo shoots.

Needing to use the crosswalk at Spring Garden Road

Quoted

"It's just not right. There's got to be something more that can be done."

Victoria MacDonald

and Brenton Street to pay a phone bill at Scotiabank, he finally borrowed a plastic shovel and metal rod from his building and spent five hours clearing the area — by himself.

"I want to cross the street and pay my phone bill like an adult person," he said.

Vienneau wasn't alone in his frustration. A woman contacted Metro last week, shocked after seeing another wheelchair user near her children's daycare centre breaking up the ice on a sidewalk with a plastic shovel.

Victoria MacDonald said the sidewalks hadn't been cleared until the man took action.

"Had he not (shovelled), he wouldn't have been able to get

up the sidewalk, let alone anybody else," she said.

"When a sidewalk is encrusted with layers of snow and ice, imagine for a moment what that must be like for someone who uses a wheelchair," said Henk van Leeuwen, president and CEO of Easter Seals.

Van Leeuwen said that accessibility is critical to ensuring Nova Scotians with physical disabilities can live independently and feel included as residents.

Restricted access to daily needs such as relationships, groceries or jobs, simply means that people with disabilities can't function fully as citizens, Van Leeuwen said.

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<p>2013 SUZUKI KIZASHI SPORTAWD</p> <p>NEW! FROM \$199 B/W M13-097</p>	<p>2012 HONDA CIVIC EX-L COUPE</p> <p>30K FROM \$178 B/W M15-055A</p>	<p>2012 NISSAN ALTIMA 2.5S</p> <p>75K FROM \$129 B/W M14-067A</p>	<p>2012 NISSAN SENTRA SE</p> <p>42K FROM \$129 B/W P13-065</p>
<p>2012 NISSAN VERSA S HATCH</p> <p>52K FROM \$113 B/W P15-010</p>	<p>2012 HYUNDAI GENESIS 3.5 V6</p> <p>57K FROM \$192 B/W U14-066</p>	<p>2011 HONDA CIVIC SPORT COUPE</p> <p>63K FROM \$129 B/W M14-033A</p>	<p>2012 HYUNDAI ELANTRA GL</p> <p>65K FROM \$122 B/W M14-020A</p>
<p>2011 TOYOTA COROLLA CE</p> <p>64K FROM \$138 B/W M12-013A</p>	<p>2011 MAZDA 3 GX SEDAN</p> <p>90K FROM \$111 B/W M14-421A</p>	<p>2011 HONDA CR-Z HYBRID</p> <p>64K FROM \$150 B/W M14-350A</p>	<p>2011 NISSAN VERSA SL HATCH</p> <p>57K FROM \$121 B/W P13-020</p>
<p>2010 TOYOTA YARIS</p> <p>35K FROM \$130 B/W M14-319A</p>	<p>2010 HYUNDAI ACCENT L</p> <p>75K FROM \$98 B/W M14-030A</p>	<p>2010 MAZDA 3 GX SEDAN</p> <p>82K FROM \$130 B/W M13-030A</p>	<p>2010 MITSUBISHI RVR GT AWD</p> <p>12K FROM \$212 B/W P15-001</p>
<p>2013 MITSUBISHI OUTLANDER SE</p> <p>58K FROM \$145 B/W M13-054A</p>	<p>2013 MITSUBISHI RVR SE</p> <p>49K FROM \$160 B/W M14-409A</p>	<p>2012 KIA SOUL 4U</p> <p>60K FROM \$113 B/W M15-004A</p>	<p>2012 KIA SORENTO LX V8</p> <p>50K FROM \$160 B/W M14-009A</p>
<p>2011 HONDA CR-V EX AWD</p> <p>527K FROM \$136 B/W P14-070</p>	<p>2011 ACURA MDX AWD</p> <p>65K FROM \$238 B/W U15-132</p>	<p>2011 MITSUBISHI RVR SE</p> <p>68K FROM \$159 B/W P14-025A</p>	<p>2012 SUZUKI GRAND VITARA JX</p> <p>77K FROM \$149 B/W M13-047A</p>

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Dal doctoral student develops topical tattoo-removal cream

Research. Cream designed to have less potential for damage than other methods

When Alec Falkenham was getting his first tattoo, he was already thinking of ways to remove it.

Not that the PhD student at Dalhousie University has any regrets about getting inked. But he saw a connection between his pathology work and the tattooing process.

"Being a scientist, I was very interested in how a tattoo worked," he said.

Falkenham realized he could use the same concepts from his work on heart cells to target cells containing tattoo pigment.

Now he says he has de-



Alec Falkenham, a PhD student in pathology, at Dalhousie University on Feb. 13. ANDREW VAUGHAN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

veloped a topical cream that could eventually remove tattoos from people's skin.

Falkenham's method, which he calls bisphosphonate liposomal tattoo removal,

is still in the research stages. But he says it could become an alternative to the current

Quoted

"I often hear from people asking if they can be a guinea pig."

Alec Falkenham

options.

"You're destroying the skin in the process of all the other techniques I've seen so far," said Falkenham.

"What we're trying to do is stay away from actually destroying the skin, while still removing the tattoo."

Falkenham's cream allows a drug to penetrate the skin, killing cells that hold tattoo pigment while leaving the surrounding cells untouched.

He said laser removal, by contrast, heats the pigment, which can cause cells to rupture and lead to blisters and scarring.

But scarring is not always expected with laser tattoo removal, said Marina Munroe, who operates Clean Canvas Tattoo Removal in Halifax and performs laser treatments.

"It's definitely a partnership when you remove someone's tattoo," Munroe said.

"Not only does the session have to be done correctly, but the person has to take care of it."

Laser removal at Munroe's clinic generally costs \$75 per square inch for one session. Munroe said most clients receive between three and six sessions, depending on the state of the tattoo.

The topical cream Falkenham is developing costs about 30 cents per square inch for each treatment. He cannot say how many treatments would be necessary because at this point he is working on only mice. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**

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0215

Acadia to get 8K doses of meningitis vaccine

Acadia University is trying to contain an outbreak of meningitis after confirming that a second student contracted the same strain of the disease that's been linked to the death of a young woman at the school.

Dr. Robert Strang, the province's chief public health officer, said Friday that a free, two-dose vaccination program for all students will begin Wednesday at the campus in Wolfville.

The roughly 8,000 doses for up to 4,000 people will also be available for staff and faculty who are at greater risk because of certain medical conditions, such as immune disorders or a compromised spleen.

"We now have an outbreak of meningococcal serogroup



Dr. Robert Strang THE CANADIAN PRESS

B amongst Acadia students," Strang said. "But the risk to any individual remains low, and there is no increased risk to the broader community."

Hope Maryka, a first-year business student, became ill

last Monday and was taken to hospital to recover. A statement on the university's website Friday said her condition is improving.

"I want to let you know that Hope is continuing to recover and is deeply appreciative of the support she has received from her friends and colleagues at Acadia and beyond," said university president Ray Ivany.

Strang said no other students had exhibited symptoms, but some members of her rugby team expressed concern that they may have shared her water bottle at a training session. Some of them have come forward to receive antibiotics as a preventative measure, Strang said.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Wildlife Act

Province mulls Sunday hunting

The Nova Scotia government is considering lifting a ban on Sunday hunting.

Under the Nova Scotia

Wildlife Act, hunting is not permitted on Sundays, although Mi'kmaq can hunt on any day.

The province says it is seeking public input on Sunday hunting.

It says lifting the ban would mean that anyone

with the appropriate licence could hunt on Sundays during hunting season.

About 50,000 people in Nova Scotia hold hunting licences. The season runs from early September to early December.

THE CANADIAN PRESS



Codey Reginald Hennigar is taken from court in Dartmouth on Jan. 9. He faces second-degree murder charges in the deaths of three people.

ANDREW VAUGHAN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Animal rescue

Baby seal saved by mounties after waddling near highway

Police in Nova Scotia are giving this rescue the seal of approval.

On Saturday at 10 a.m., the RCMP in Inverness County say they received a report of a baby seal waddling near Highway 19 in Newton.

When an officer arrived, they found the seal on a property and placed it on the back of a RCMP truck using a seal net.

It was the happy ending to a story of unexpected love — on Valentine's Day — between police and a baby seal.

"When a baby seal gets separated from his loved ones on Valentine's Day, RCMP showed their true love and compassion for all creatures," a RCMP release states. **METRO**



The baby seal strikes a pose. HO/RCMP

Psych testing extended in murder case

Hennigar trial.

Provincial judge extends evaluation of man charged in the deaths of three people

Future court date

Codey Reginald Hennigar is scheduled to return to court March 13.

Clifford William Ward, 81, Mildred Ann Ward, 54, and Ida Raye Ward, 74, died in the fire.

The blaze broke out on the afternoon of Jan. 7 in Wyse Corner about 25 kilometres northeast of Halifax's airport.

Hennigar's case was before provincial court today, where a judge granted a 30-day extension to his psychiatric assessment. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**

A psychiatric assessment has been extended for a man charged in connection with the deaths of three people in a house fire in the Halifax area.

Codey Reginald Hennigar is charged with three counts of second-degree murder after the remains of three people were found in a home last month.

Lost money. Police seek owners of cash bundle found in thrift donation

Halifax police are asking the public to help find the owner of a large sum of money that turned up at a Dartmouth thrift store last week.

According to a release, an employee at the store discovered "several thousands of dollars" hidden inside a bundle of folded drapes on Feb. 9.

The money was contained inside several sealed envelopes, and information inside suggested the money was withdrawn from a bank in Guysborough County.

Police followed up with the bank, but too much time has passed for any information to be provided on the owner.

It's believed that the drapes were donated sometime in January 2015 somewhere in Nova Scotia, but it's impossible to determine a specific location as the store buys donated material

Proof of identity

In order to claim the money, the owner will have to provide the correct information to take possession of it.

- **Total amount.** The potential owner will have to confirm how much money was in the envelopes and in the denominations they were in, as well as having the correct bank and/or bank account number.

in bulk.

The owner of the money, or anyone with information regarding the owner of the money, is asked to contact Halifax Regional Police at 490-5016. **METRO**

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Highline model shown

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Day to honour Viola Desmond highlights fight for social justice

Human rights.

Province celebrated Heritage Day for first time in honour of Halifax entrepreneur

When Viola Desmond sat down in a New Glasgow movie theatre in 1946, she didn't intend to make a stand against racial inequality.

As she told a newspaper reporter in an interview about the incident, published on Nov. 30, 1946, in The Halifax Chronicle, she sat where she did to be closer to the screen because of her eyesight. She also wasn't aware of the unwritten policy that only white people could sit in those seats.

Her choice of seats in the Roseland Theatre that day led to her arrest, unlawful conviction and a subsequent appeal. And her treatment sparked dialogue about human rights.

"She laid the foundation in regards to justice and how black people were being treated in Nova Scotia. Even though it happened in New Glasgow, similar incidents were happening all over the province," said Crystal States, an educator with the Black Educators Association and the representative for the African Nova Scotian North Central Network.

"It was a breakthrough in



Roseland Theatre in New Glasgow. Inset: A Canada Post stamp of Viola. NEW GLASGOW NEWS

social justice that had predated the civil rights movement in the (United) States," said the New Glasgow resident.

Desmond was a successful Halifax entrepreneur with her own salon, beauty school and line of beauty products for black women.

"To be a black entrepreneur was groundbreaking,"

said Henderson Paris, a New Glasgow town councillor and founder of the Run Against Racism.

He's also the honorary chairman of the Marathon of Respect and Equality, which replaced the Run Against Racism, and the town's representative on the UNESCO race relations and anti-discrimination committee.

"She was building her business and through this, this incident unfolded. Being the strong woman she was, she wasn't standing for it. It was not right, and something needed to be done," he said.

Desmond was travelling through Pictou County on Nov. 8, 1946, when she experienced car troubles and had to stop in New Glasgow to have them fixed. While waiting, she decided to watch a movie at the Roseland Theatre and purchased a ticket for the show.

Desmond returned to her seat in the lower area because many seats were empty, and the theatre manager demanded that she move upstairs.

When she didn't comply, she was arrested.

NEW GLASGOW NEWS

Trailblazer

Henderson Paris is hopeful that the awareness created by honouring Viola Desmond on Monday's Heritage Day will keep social justice issues at the forefront of people's minds. "She certainly was a trailblazer. She set the stage: If something is not right, speak out and fight it until it's rectified. It certainly paved the way for many people after her to make a stand — challenge something when it's not right," he said.

After taking her seat in the downstairs section of the theatre, she was told to move to the balcony because she had paid for the cheaper ticket.

Thinking it was a mistake, she tried to purchase the more expensive ticket for the downstairs section, but the cashier refused and told her she wasn't allowed to sell downstairs tickets to people like her.

Desmond returned to her seat in the lower area because many seats were empty, and the theatre manager demanded that she move upstairs.

When she didn't comply, she was arrested.

NEW GLASGOW NEWS

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Politics. Canada opposes 15 Palestinian attempts to join UN treaties

Canada has formally opposed Palestinian attempts to join 15 different United Nations treaties and conventions — a position that puts the federal government on the wrong side of history and at odds with its citizenry, the Palestinian envoy in Ottawa says.

Canada is objecting in writing to the UN because it maintains Palestine is not a legal state. The Palestinians have formally replied to Canada's objections in writing, issuing a pointed reminder that they won non-member observer status in November 2012 at the UN General Assembly.

The dispute has sparked scathing Palestinian criticism

to date of the Harper government's support of Israel.

"It pains the Palestinians to know that Canada is trying to exclude us from our rightful place in the family of nations. It is awkward to see a great country like Canada relegated to the role of cheerleader for Israeli extremists at the UN," Said Hamad, the chief representative of the Palestinian delegation to Canada, said in an emailed response to questions.

"When future Canadians look back at Canada's positions during this time they will be appalled that their country was so boldly opposed to justice and so far on the wrong side of history," he added. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**

Part-time soldiers wait up to two years for severance

Nicholas Vanderplas, a former corporal and part-time member of the infantry, says he's used to shoddy paperwork in the army, but waiting nearly two years for \$4,500 in severance pay has exhausted his patience.

He is not alone.

As of last week, there was a backlog of 2,754 severance payment cases waiting to be processed. And those part-time soldiers who are on the list now, having just left the military, face longer waits than those just a few years ago.

According to the department, it takes up to 21 months in some cases to process reservist severance claims through a old, inefficient system the Department of National Defence had promised to fix.

"I am just so disgusted with everything that's been done there," said Vanderplas, 24, of London, Ont., who quit in May 2013 after dislocating his shoulder in a helicopter rappelling exercise, an injury that left him unable to do other training.

Quoted

"I've faced a plethora of the most horrible excuses that you can't take from any other employer."

Nicholas Vanderplas, a former corporal and part-time member of the infantry

der in a helicopter rappelling exercise, an injury that left him unable to do other training.

By comparison, members of the regular force waited 18 weeks for severance.

Former military ombudsman Pierre Daigle investigated a series of complaints in the late summer and early fall of 2013 when reservists, unlike full-time counterparts, were waiting between nine and 17 months to receive the stipulated payouts after shedding their uniforms.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Sri Lankan migrants

Human smuggling cases before SCC

The Supreme Court of Canada will hear arguments starting Monday in a series of cases that question Canada's human smuggling laws. Four of the five cases involve people connected to the arrival of ships filled with Sri Lankan migrants. One of the cases involves four defendants who were charged with human smuggling on board a ship, which was carrying 76 Sri Lankan Tamils when it was intercepted. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**

Health

Measles cases linked to Christian youth gathering

A cluster of measles cases in Ontario has been linked to a Christian youth gathering in Toronto, health officials said Monday. The province is asking nearly 1,000 people who were at the Acquire the Fire gathering held at the Queensway Cathedral on Feb. 6 and 7 to check their immunization status as the number of confirmed cases in Ontario continues to rise. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**



From left: Comedian Rick Mercer, director Atom Egoyan, and author Michael Ondaatje are shown in these file photos. In an open letter released Monday, 250 notable Canadians — including Mercer, Egoyan, and Ondaatje — urged Prime Minister Stephen Harper to press his Egyptian counterpart on the case of jailed Canadian-Egyptian journalist Mohamed Fahmy. PHOTOS: THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE; GETTY IMAGES FILE; STR/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Harper urged to intervene in Mohamed Fahmy's case

Open letter. 250 notable Canadians called on PM to press Egyptian counterpart el-Sissi on journalist's deportation

A number of prominent Canadians are calling on Prime Minister Stephen Harper to intervene "personally and immediately" in the case of a Canadian journalist on trial in Egypt.

In an open letter released Monday, 250 people — including comedian Rick Mercer, filmmaker Atom Egoyan, author Michael Ondaatje and diplomat Stephen Lewis — urged Harper to press his Egyptian counterpart on Mohamed Fahmy's case.

Fahmy was released on bail last Friday after spending more than a year in a Cairo prison,

but he is set to return to court next week for the continuation of a retrial on terror-related charges his family has called ridiculous.

The letter to Harper calls for the prime minister to ask that Fahmy be allowed to leave Egypt under a new law that allows foreigners convicted or accused of crimes to be deported.

"We the undersigned are writing to urge you to intervene personally and immediately in the case of Canadian journalist Mohamed Fahmy, who is currently facing retrial in Egypt after 411 days of incarceration," the letter to Harper said.

"We stand in support of Mr. Fahmy along with thousands of Canadians, international human rights organizations and global political leaders urging you to contact (Egyptian) President (Abdel Fattah) el-Sissi and request that Mr. Fahmy's deportation order be

Detention

Fahmy and his colleagues were arrested in December 2013 and were convicted last summer after a trial that was denounced as a sham. A retrial was ordered after an appeal in early January.

honoured."

When Harper was asked by reporters last week if he had spoken directly to the Egyptian president about Fahmy, he would say only that Canada's government has been in contact with Egyptian authorities at all levels, including his level.

Fahmy and his family have criticized the Canadian government for what they see as a lack of adequate action on the case, particularly after Fahmy's Australian colleague was deported from Egypt two weeks ago.

In an interview with the British newspaper The Independent on the day he left prison, Fahmy said it was the "geopolitical score-settling" among Middle Eastern countries that put him and his two Al Jazeera English colleagues — Australian Peter Greste and Egyptian Baher Mohamed — behind bars. But Fahmy has also said he blames Canada, particularly Harper and former foreign affairs minister John Baird, for failing to win his freedom.

Fahmy's fiancée emphasized that it's important that Canada pushes on deportation because the 40-year-old journalist's ordeal is far from over.

"It's the role of Canada now, they have to show that it's for the national interest of Egypt to deport Mohamed," Marwa Omara said. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**

Flip to Voices page 15 for Stephen Kimmer's column on Mohamed Fahmy.

Radio-Canada workers hate Tory values: Harper



Prime Minister Stephen Harper says "a lot" of Radio-Canada employees "hate" conservative values.

Harper says those values that are loathed by many employees of CBC's French-language network are the same ones that he says are supported by a large number of Quebecers. Harper made the

comments during a French-language interview with Quebec City radio station FM93, conducted last Friday and aired today.

Harper's comments about Radio-Canada came in response to a question about how he plans to convince Quebecers to vote for his party in the upcoming federal

election. He says he doesn't believe that voters in Quebec are predominantly left-leaning.

Rather, he says, Quebecers approve of the measures taken by his government: lowering taxes, staying tough on crime and cracking down on the threat of terrorism.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Ukraine

Fierce battle persists for rail hub

Intense artillery exchanges between Ukrainian government forces and Russian-backed separatists persisted Monday around a strategic town in eastern Ukraine — fighting that threatens to dash a cease-fire deal brokered by European leaders

last week.

Under the cease-fire agreement negotiated by the leaders of Ukraine, Russia, Germany and France, the warring sides are to begin withdrawing heavy weapons from the front line Tuesday. That plan already looks at risk, with the rebels saying they are not satisfied that conditions are in place for the process to go ahead.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Human rights meeting

North Korea warns of strong response to meeting

North Korea says it will “strongly respond” to a conference in Washington on Tuesday about its widespread human rights abuses and says the United States ignored Pyongyang’s offer

to attend and defend itself.

North Korea’s UN Ambassador Jang Il Hun declined to explain to reporters Monday what a strong response would be.

“The U.S. ignored our request for participation because they are afraid of disclosure of their plot” that North Korea maintains is based on fabrications and lies, Jang said.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Mali

UN hopeful about peace talks

The United Nations’ representative to Mali expressed hope for the latest round of peace talks as they began Monday between the warring factions in the country.

The talks, which first began in Algiers in September, are between Mali’s

government, separatist rebel groups based in the north and government-allied militias. They come as fighting has reignited between the rival groups, and in some cases involving UN peacekeepers. “This meeting represents an historic chance for a lasting peace in Mali,” said Mongi Hamdi, the head of the U.N. mission in Mali.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Danish sources name slain suspect in Copenhagen attack

Denmark. 22-year-old gunman with gang connections got out of jail two weeks ago

The slain gunman behind two deadly shooting attacks in Copenhagen was released from jail just two weeks ago and might have become radicalized there last summer, a source close to the Danish terror investigation told The Associated Press on Monday.

Two Danish sources close to the investigation confirmed to the Associated Press that the slain gunman was named Omar Abdel Hamid El-Hussein. They spoke on condition of anonymity because Copenhagen police have not named the gunman, who they said was a 22-year-old Dane with a history of violence and gang connections. Several Danish media have already named him.

One source told the AP that El-Hussein had been in pre-trial detention for a long time but was released two weeks ago. He also said the corrections authority had alerted Danish security service PET last year after they

noticed worrisome changes in El-Hussein’s behaviour last summer.

He wouldn’t give specifics but said such alerts are issued when inmates change their attitude or behaviour in way that “sets off alarm bells.”

PET spokeswoman Lotte Holmstrup declined to comment on the report, saying “we are working on finding out what has happened.”

PET director Jens Madsen on Sunday confirmed that the gunman was known to the agency before the week-end attacks in Copenhagen that killed two people and wounded five police officers. He said the gunman may have been inspired by last month’s terror attacks by Islamic extremists in Paris that killed 17 people, but did not elaborate on when his agency began tracking him.

The news about the suspected gunman came as Danes mourned the victims of the country’s first fatal terror attacks in 30 years — and, in an unusual development, some also put flowers on the street at the spot where police killed El-Hussein. The prime ministers of Denmark and Sweden were expected to join thousands of people at



Hundreds of people gather for a vigil near the cultural club in Copenhagen, Denmark, Monday. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

memorials in Copenhagen on Monday evening.

While a Danish court on Monday jailed two suspected accomplices of El-Hussein’s

for 10 days, Prime Minister Helle Thorning-Schmidt insisted there were no signs the gunman had any links to a wider terror cell.

“But we will, of course, in the coming time evaluate our fight against radicalization. We are already doing a lot,” she said. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Danish terror incidents

- 2012: Three arrested with weapons
- 2010: Four arrested planning shooting; man injured preparing letter bomb that exploded; three arrested for suspected planning of attack against Jyllands-Posten; Man with axe broke into the home of prophet cartoonist, Kurt Westergaard
- 2008: Danish Embassy in Islamabad, Pakistan, targeted by car bomb
- 2007: Two arrested conducting test blasts; eight arrested preparing explosives
- 2006: Seven arrested with explosives
- 2005: Four arrested in bomb plot
- 1985: Algerian tourist killed by exploding bomb outside Copenhagen office of the North West Orient airline company

Egyptian warplanes strike ISIL targets in Libya

Egypt bombed ISIL militants in neighbouring Libya on Monday and called on the United States and Europe to join an international military intervention in the chaotic North African state after extremists beheaded a group of Egyptian Christians.

The airstrikes bring Egypt overtly into Libya’s turmoil, a reflection of Cairo’s increasing alarm. Egypt now faces threats on two fronts — a growing

stronghold of radicals on its western border and a militant insurgency of ISIL allies on its eastern flank in the Sinai Peninsula — as well as its own internal challenges.

ISIL weapons caches and training camps were targeted “to avenge the bloodshed and to seek retribution from the killers,” a military statement said. “Let those far and near know that Egyptians have a

shield to protect and safeguard the security of the country and a sword that cuts off terrorism.”

The announcement on state radio represents Egypt’s first public acknowledgement of military action in post-Moammar Gadhafi Libya, where there has been almost no government control.

Libya is where ISIL has built up its strongest presence out-

side Syria and Iraq. Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi is lobbying Europe and the United States for a co-ordinated international response similar to the coalition air campaign in those countries.

El-Sissi spoke with France’s president and Italy’s prime minister Monday about Libya, and sent his foreign minister, Sameh Shukri, to New York to consult at the United Nations

ahead of a terrorism conference opening Wednesday in Washington.

The bombs were dropped by U.S.-made F-16 fighter jets that left Egyptian bases for targets in the eastern Libyan city of Darna, according to Egyptian and Libyan security officials who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to talk to the press.

The strikes came hours after ISIL issued a grisly video of the beheadings of 21 Egyptian Christians, mainly young men from impoverished families who were kidnapped after travelling to Libya for work. The video shows them being marched onto what is purported to be a Libyan beach before masked militants with knives carve off their heads.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

'Diminished' accountability hurts the church's credibility: Cardinal

Sex abuse. Leading the charge against clerical misconduct, cardinal committed to greater transparency, zero tolerance

Quoted

"We cannot fail to do all that is possible to restore our credibility."

Cardinal Sean O'Malley on the importance of making the Catholic Church more accountable with respect to clerical sex abuse

Pope Francis' point man on clerical sex abuse said Monday the Catholic Church — by failing to punish bishops who covered up for pedophiles — had seriously harmed its credibility and that it must now lead the way by "humbly making the commitment to accountability, transparency and zero tolerance."

Cardinal Sean O'Malley, archbishop of Boston, said canon lawyers and theologians were reviewing proposals to present to the pope on holding bishops

and religious superiors accountable. The proposals were developed by Francis' commission of experts, which O'Malley chairs and includes two survivors of abuse.

O'Malley said the sex abuse scandal had "seriously diminished" the church's credibility in its core spheres of defending human rights, the unborn and immigrants.

"This has been caused in large part by the perception of a lack of accountability on the part of our leader-



Cardinal Sean Patrick O'Malley, of Boston, attends a press conference at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome on Monday. O'Malley said the perceived lack of accountability within the church's leadership has caused many to lose their trust in the Catholic Church. ISABELLA BONOTTO/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ship, causing many people to lose their trust in us and in the church," he said. "We cannot fail to do all that is

possible to restore our credibility."

Victims of abuse have long denounced the Vatican

for failing to sanction any bishop who covered up for an abuser.

O'Malley spoke at a con-

ference at the Jesuit Pontifical Gregorian University, which is leading the church's efforts to educate a new generation of priests about preventing abuse and helping survivors through a specialized centre for education and research. Francis publicly endorsed the initiative Monday.

O'Malley said the aim was also to educate the older generation of church leaders about the importance of accountability "and the consequences of not having accountability." He said the commission would be hosting seminars for Vatican officials, as well as new bishops passing through Rome for training, to teach them how to handle abuse cases when they arise, how to care for victims and prevent abuse from happening in the first place.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



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Candy. Cadbury urged to sell fair-trade Easter eggs

World Vision says it wants Cadbury to hop to it — and bring an ethical Easter egg to Canada.

The international relief and development organization says that nearly 6,000 Canadians have signed its petition urging the chocolate maker to sell its fair-trade Easter treat here.

The group has used an email campaign among its supporters and social media to share a link to the petition and encourage them to sign.

Cadbury already sells a fair-trade Easter egg in Australia. In Canada, Cadbury Dairy Milk bars are currently

Fair trade

Fair-trade-certified cocoa ensures producers are small family farms that do not use forced or child labour and receive a guaranteed price for their harvest.

- About 2 million children around the world, largely in West Africa, work in dangerous conditions farming cocoa, according to World Vision.

fair-trade certified, spokesperson Stephanie Minna Cass said. **TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE**

Airlines

Checked baggage fees boost profits

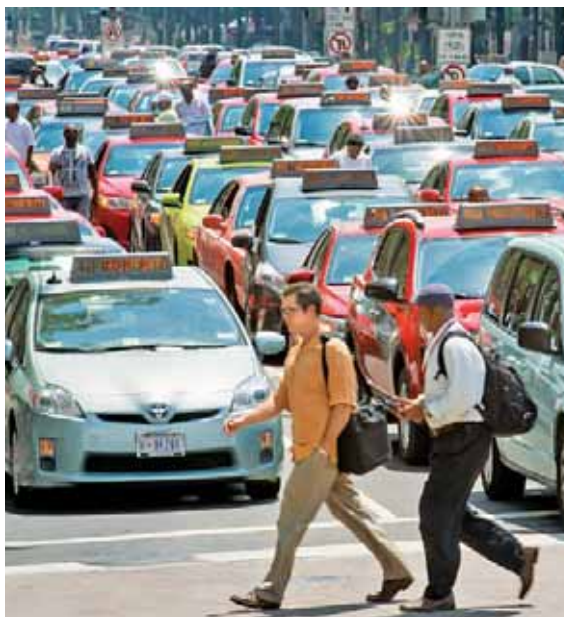
Checked baggage fees are paying off for Canada's two major airlines. The charges are part of ancillary fees — which also include passenger fees for preferred seating, in-flight meals, and

premium economy privileges — that airlines have tapped to boost profits.

Air Canada's ancillary revenues per passenger grew 18 per cent in the fourth quarter from a year ago. WestJet Airlines boosted its forecasted take from the fees by 11 per cent to \$100 million.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Uber, Airbnb highlight need for regulation, report says



Washington, D.C. taxi drivers protest on Pennsylvania Avenue in June last year, bringing street traffic to a stop as they demand an end to ride-sharing services such as Uber X and Lyft. **PAUL J. RICHARDS/AFP/GETTY IMAGES**

Sharing economy.

As companies move into new territory, governments must react quickly, warns the Mowat Centre

Companies such as Airbnb, Uber and TaskRabbit, which epitomize what's known as the sharing economy, are not going away, so governments must figure out ways to regulate them, a new report says. And that must happen quickly, before such firms become entrenched in their ways.

That's the message from the Mowat Centre, a think-tank at the University of Toronto. Mowat urges policymakers to recognize that they must step up to protect the public interest, while also ensuring that they don't destroy innovation.

"You have a Wild West

situation where people are engaging in transactions and the details haven't been thought out," said Mowat Centre policy director Sunil Johal, who co-authored the report, *Policy-making for the Sharing Economy: Beyond Whack-A-Mole*, with colleague Noah Zon.

Making cash by renting an apartment or doing an odd job has happened for ages. The difference today is that such activities are "at a scale that blurs the boundaries of the personal and the commercial and threatens to disrupt existing markets and regulatory models," the report says.

Johal concedes that no jurisdiction has come up with a simple solution to deal with these so-called disruptive companies that offer peer-to-peer service, such as a linking homeowner to a house cleaner, or a tourist to a room, or an artisan selling a handmade item to buyers.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

CP Rail strike ends as both sides agree to resume talks

A day-old strike at Canadian Pacific Railway screeched to an unexpected halt Monday with the company and its union agreeing to binding arbitration just hours before employees were to be legislated back to work.

Labour Minister Kellie

Quoted

"A mediator will be named ... Details to come."

Teamsters Canada union announcing on Twitter that the CP strike had ended.

Leitch was on the verge of introducing a bill to end the dispute when she suddenly emerged from the House of

Commons to reveal the two sides had beaten her to it.

The strike by 3,300 locomotive engineers and other CP train workers began Sunday. Effects of the stoppage were felt Monday as the strike disrupted service on several Montreal-area com-

muter train routes, services used by an estimated 19,000 people every day.

Leitch said the strike could have cost the Canadian economy more than \$200 million in lost GDP every week.

Earlier, Teamsters union president Douglas Finnson

had said he was disappointed by news of a back-to-work bill, calling it "premature and unnecessary."

He said the crucial issues of driver fatigue and working conditions were best settled through negotiations.

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VOICES

IT WASN'T BETTER IN THE OLD DAYS

Instead of dropping city sidewalk clearance altogether, we should identify areas that would benefit from hand clearing



YOUR RIDE
ERICA BUTLER

Sidewalks are the common denominator of how we all get around, and we simply can't afford to leave them ice and snow covered as they have been so far this winter.

I've heard people say it was better two years ago, when residents in many parts of Halifax were responsible for sidewalk shovelling.

Of course, it's common sense that thousands of people with shovels will outperform a few dozen bobcats doing the same job, but I'm here to tell you it was not better everywhere in the old days.

The sidewalks around my neighbourhood were not passable in 2012, not because most people didn't shovel, but because not everybody did. And a stretch of bare pavement is basically useless if swaths of untouched ice or snow bisect it randomly.

Then there are corners and curb cuts. In many areas they remained untouched for the season — barely passable for a spry walker, and a complete nightmare for anyone using a cane, wheelchair, or scooter.

So yes, we need to change something, but bailing on city-led sidewalk clearing is not the answer.

Instead, let's consider adjusting priorities, changing techniques, and introducing a little choice into the system.

There are neighbourhoods in Halifax where snow-clearing compliance used to hit 100 per cent.

Why don't we cut these diligent shovelers loose? Let's create a neighbourhood opt-out system, where areas actually able to

DO YOU HAVE A TRANSIT IDEA?

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halifax@metronews.ca

crowdsource their shovelling can do so. Then there's technique.

In city staff's winter operations report last year, under "Areas for Improvement and Options — Sidewalks" there's an intriguing suggestion in the list: "identifying areas for hand work."

Right now, we're letting machines do the work, and they're not working. Maybe we need some real humans with shovels behind the machines, especially at curb cuts, making sure what they're leaving behind is actually passable.

Last but not least, something is amiss in how we prioritize sidewalk clearing. The current service standards place private lanes on a higher priority (within 24 hours) than our residential walkways (within 36 hours).

And though transit routes make the highest priority for streets (12 hours), sidewalks on transit routes are Tier 2 (18 hours), and bus stops are the lowest priority (48 hours from end of snowfall.)

As we complain about this year's abysmal sidewalk conditions, let's put our energy into fixing the problem for real, not sending the pendulum swinging back to a system that didn't work, either, but in a different way.

Erica Butler lives in Halifax and uses transit, a car and a bicycle to get around the city. You can follow her on Twitter at @HabitatRadio.



A sidewalk plow busily works during a storm in Halifax in January. While the new system of snow-clearing leaves much to be desired, going back to the old system is not the answer. JEFF HARPER/METRO

All citizens, including Fahmy, should have Canada's protection



STEPHEN KIMBER
readers@metronews.ca

Canadian journalist Mohamed Fahmy sits trapped in Cairo limbo awaiting retrial next week on trumped-up charges he spread "false news" supporting Egypt's outlawed Muslim Brotherhood.

Meanwhile, his Australian colleague, Peter Grete — who was convicted with Fahmy on the same charges last year — is home in Brisbane after being released Feb. 1 from what he calls the "near-death experience" of an Egyptian prison.

Why the difference? The Harper government. So suggests Fahmy himself.

Australia's prime minister, Fahmy told the CBC, spoke directly with Egyptian president Abdel el-Sissi on three occasions, pressing for Grete's release. Harper has refused to confirm whether he's spoken to el-Sissi even once. "We should have a prime minister calling Sisi-

Not sticking up for Canadians

It's not the first time the Harper government — advancing ideological agendas, or simply demonstrating diplomatic deafness — has left Canadians to the un-tender mercies of foreign governments.

si over the phone," Fahmy said.

Worse, he added, recently resigned Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird played his usual bull-inside-the-diplomatic-china-shop role, insisting publicly during a visit to Cairo last month Fahmy would not face a new trial or further punishment in Canada if released.

But that was exactly the "diplomatic cover" el-Sissi needed to justify releasing Fahmy. So, instead of following Grete out freedom's door, Fahmy now faces even more

prison time.

It's not the first time the Harper government — advancing ideological agendas, or simply demonstrating diplomatic deafness — has left Canadians to the un-tender mercies of foreign governments.

Ottawa only reluctantly repatriated Canadian-born child soldier Omar Khadr — the last Western prisoner at the notorious Guantanamo detention camp — after our Supreme Court ruled this country had a "duty to protect" Khadr, whose charter rights were violated. The courts also had to force Ottawa to allow Abousfian Abdelrazik — a Sudanese-born Canadian who'd been cleared of allegations he supported al-Qaida — to return to Canada in 2009. And even though as transport minister John Baird championed the innocence of Bashir Makhtal, a Canadian sentenced to life in prison in Ethiopia for belonging to a terrorist organization, he did little as foreign minister to free him.

Why not? As Makhtal notes, his cousin "is

DO YOU HAVE A COLUMN IDEA?

What do you want to see on this page?
readers@metronews.ca

a Muslim-Canadian black man sitting in prison. I hate to admit this, but this is the reality."

So, too, is the reality Canada has chosen human-rights-violating Ethiopia as a "country of focus" for our international aid. Or that we support repressive Egypt on its "aspirational journey to democracy."

Last week, Canada changed foreign ministers. Now we need to change foreign policy. All Canadians, including Mohamed Fahmy, deserve to know their country will support them when they need it most.

Stephen Kimber is a professor of journalism at the University of King's College in Halifax, as well as an award-winning writer, editor and broadcaster.



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Rita Ora, left, and Tegan & Sara (Sara Quin pictured here) will be performing at the Academy Awards on Sunday. ALL PHOTOS: GETTY IMAGES

The Academy Awards set to be a sonic affair

Preview. Oscar show looks more like the Grammys with a number of big musical acts performing

Lady Gaga. Jennifer Hudson. Common and John Legend. Adam Levine. Rita Ora. Tegan & Sara. Tim McGraw.

This isn't the lineup for an upcoming pop concert, but rather for Sunday's Academy Awards.

"We want to entertain," said Neil Meron, producing his third consecutive Oscar ceremony with Craig Zadan. "And there's no better entertainment than to do it with music."

Host Neil Patrick Harris will perform an original song by the Oscar-winning writers

behind *Let It Go*, the producers said. Called *Moving Pictures*, the musical number will set a "subliminal theme" for the evening, Meron said.

"It really is celebratory about movies and yet it's kind of cheeky in a way," he said. "But yet it has a beautiful musical motif which ... we integrate throughout the show as kind of a call-back theme."

Added Zadan: "We didn't want to do a musical number that could have been on the Tonys, or anywhere else for that matter."

"It's a multimedia musical number," he said, "something that we've not done before."

Music is part of the production pair's professional DNA, though. Meron and Zadan produced the *The Sound of Music* and *Peter Pan* live TV specials, as well as the movie musicals *Hairspray* and *Chicago*, which won the



John Legend will perform with Common at the Oscars.

best picture Oscar in 2003.

The producers said they started booking musical acts even before they learned the year's nominees. But they were delighted with the nominated original songs.

"We were smiled upon in that respect," Meron said.

A spate of stars will bring those songs to life on the Oscar stage.

Common and Legend are set to perform their song, *Glory*, from *Selma*. Levine will sing *Lost Stars* from *Begin Again*. Ora will take on Diane Warren's song from *Beyond the Lights*, *Grateful*. Tegan & Sara will join with The Lonely Island for The Lego Movie song, *Everything is Awesome*. McGraw will perform Glen Campbell's song *I'm Not Gonna Miss You*, from the documentary about his struggle with Alzheimer's, *Glen Campbell... I'll Be Me*.

The producers wouldn't say what Hudson, Gaga and other entertainers, including Jack Black and Anna Kendrick, will sing.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Fashion Week

Pregnant Coco Rocha glows in NYC

Coco Rocha's baby bump has caught up with the limelight and the proud supermodel mama couldn't be happier.

The Canadian redheaded beauty is attending multiple shows at this year's New York Fashion Week, posing for cameras and chatting about her spring arrival — a girl.

"I'm not hiding. I'm so excited. It took a while for the bump to show so now that it's showing, it's been fun," a beaming Rocha said.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



Coco Rocha THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Gossip

Nicki Minaj and Meek Mill caught canoodling

Nicki Minaj and rapper Meek Mill were spotted sitting together courtside during the NBA All-Star game Saturday Night at Barclay's Center in Brooklyn, and again during the All-Star game at Madison Square Garden.

Are they dating? We can't say for sure, but, by the look on their faces, they look like they were having themselves a good ol' time. Love was definitely in the air.

LENYON WHITAKER/METRO IN NEW YORK

Drake reveals a darker side on LP

For as long as Drake's been around, almost everything about him — his Mr.Sensitive image, his sweater collection, his cheesy photos with various professional athletes — has been the subject of a never-ending stream of Internet memes.

Still, Drake and his talent are no joke, and the Grammy winner's surprise album, *If You're Reading This*

It's Too Late, dares critics to say otherwise. Released six years to the day that Drake debuted his super successful *So Far Gone* mixtape, the Toronto native's latest set finds him in a serious space, not asking for respect, but demanding it.

If the mixtape's previously released track, *6 God*, wasn't warning enough, Drake is

more confrontational these days. "Please don't speak to me like I'm that Drake from four years ago, I'm at a higher place, thinkin' they lions and tigers and bears, I go huntin'," puts heads on my fireplace," he raps on *Energy*.

As usual, he's bragging about his crown (see: opening track *Legend*) but brooding over its weight (*No Tellin'*).

Compared to previous projects, though, *If You're Reading This* is darker and grittier, with a mix of lyrics and tone, that Drake, his longtime collaborator Noah '40' Shebib and crew have no doubt fashioned to match the brutal cold of Toronto, or "the 6," as they call it. (The name nods to the city's 416 and 647 area codes).

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



Drake GETTY IMAGES

Music

Finding Bono



SOUND CHECK
Alan Cross
scene@metronews.ca

The man behind the counter at an Irish tourist office in central Dublin gave me a puzzled look.

"A what now walk?"

"A U2 walk. A guided tour of the U2 sites of Dublin."

He paused, looking even more confused. "Why wouldja wanna do that?"

So began my search for U2. You can walk all over Dublin for days without seeing anything that indicates the world's biggest band lives here. Sure, you can find the odd artifact. One of the Trabants used in the lighting rig for the ZooTV tour is hanging upside down in the Hard Rock Cafe. There's the graffiti on the exterior walls of U2's Windmill Lane Studios. And if you look hard in the tiny shops off Grafton Street, you might find a caricature portrait of the band selling for a couple of euros.

The band barely exists



The gates of Bono's house. ALAN CROSS

in their hometown. Walk onto the grounds on Mount Temple School and the only musical mention in sight is of an Elvis review being staged by the students. The Clarence, the hotel U2 owns in Temple Bar, bears no mark of its famous owners. The only musical thing I could find in the whole place was a miniature statue of Thin Lizzy's Phil Lynott standing next to the whiskey bottles in the Octagon Bar.

Other musicians are proudly celebrated. Rory Gallagher has a street corner named after him, with one of his guitars hanging high on a wall. There's an alley in Temple Bar with giant artistic

renderings of the Pogues, Sinéad O'Connor and the aforementioned Lynott.

But U2? Ghosts. Well, almost. You might run across "Bono is a pox" graffiti which appears randomly on walls throughout the Republic, left by people who are unhappy with U2's moves to dodge paying taxes in Ireland.

If you're a fan visiting Dublin and want to see all the U2 landmarks, best do all your homework before you boarding the plane.

I thought about asking Bono about this when I drove up to the gate of his house in the Dublin suburb of Killiney, but he didn't answer the door. Funny, that.

Murphy goes for grooves, not laughs, with reggae song

Interview. Comedian Eddie Murphy had a hit in 1985 with Party All the Time, 30 years later he's released a new single, Oh Jah Jah



Eddie Murphy's new release is called Oh Jah Jah. GETTY

Why the long wait before you released something new?

I wasn't waiting. I was just re-recording stuff. I stopped putting stuff out in the '80s because it was like a bunch of actors putting albums out. So I just kept writing my stuff and doing my stuff privately because I had no pressure and no expectations.

Will there be an upcoming album or collaborations?

I have collaborations with all kinds of different artists over the years. Stuff with B.B. King, I've recorded with Paul McCartney, Snoop, ... Raphael Saadiq. As far as future collaborations, that all has to come together organically. As far as an album coming out, if one of these

"You should put a record out because it's a good song and if they didn't know it was you, they'd like it under a different name," but, hey, these are my tracks and I'm not hiding behind any of it.

Any upcoming film projects?

I just finished a movie. It's not a comedy, though. It's called Cook and it's got a really strong director, the guy that directed Driving Miss Daisy and Tender Mercies, a guy named Bruce Beresford.

Any plans on returning to standup comedy?

When I was doing standup, it was a 100 comedians, now it's a 100,000 of them. So if I got onstage again, I'd have to be doing something that makes me different from all these other 100,000 comics. My fantasy when I think about live performances is a band playing a half-hour or 40 minutes of music and having the curtains go down then doing an hour of standup comedy. **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

tracks jumps off and I get some momentum going. I'll put an album, but I'm not planning an album until I'm sure people want to hear something.

If you were to release a reggae album, would you put it out as Eddie Murphy or would you think of a reggae name?

I've got 25 years of stuff on the shelf. I could go right now and pick six, seven, eight reggae songs and put out a reggae album. I've had people say,

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Marathon training includes finding the best gear and clothing materials. ISTOCK

So you want to run a marathon

Training. Now is the time to prepare for major running events happening this spring

EVA
KIS

Metro News in New York City

Pumped up from watching marathons and thinking you can conquer the course this year?

The can-do attitude is a good start, but you're going to need some guidance — not to mention encouragement.

To get started, be as scientific as possible in your training, advises Josh "Speedy" Maio, head coach of the running program at Paragon Sports in Manhat-

tan.

"Test, test, test and test again, eliminating as many variables as you can to achieve optimum results," he says.

That includes figuring out what gear, clothing materials and food is for you.

"You'll want to track your eating habits heading into, during and after your long runs so you know exactly what works for you and your body."

All that experimenting — sport is a science, after all — will help get you race-ready in body and mind.

"As you hone everything, this will help you relax a little bit because you know everything you are using and are doing for your race works," Maio says.

"It's amazing what that

Quoted

"Test, test, test and test again, eliminating as many variables as you can to achieve optimum results."

Josh "Speedy" Maio, running program coach on a key aspect of marathon training

little bit of stress relief can do for you."

We asked Maio to start the countdown to your training for the big event in 2015.

Three reasons to run with a group

Distraction: "When you are training for a marathon, you can find yourself running a lot of miles alone, and those miles can get very tough. Having people to talk to and distract your brain

from what your body has to do can make those miles just melt away without feeling half as gruelling as they can."

Focus: "We all have speed, tempo and hill workouts to do during our training cycles, and these are all things we lament having to do. Nobody likes doing them, but having a group to battle through them with makes them much more bearable and, dare I say it, pleasant."

Accountability: "The group keeps you honest. You become 'accountabilibuddies' that motivate, support and push you towards your ultimate goal."

Two ways a specialty running store can help

Expertise: "Running specialists are involved in (your local) running community and can offer advice and recommendations from personal experience."

The right fit: "Most running footwear is separated into two categories: neutral and stability. Running specialists are trained to help runners determine their gait before they choose the type of running shoes that best fits them."

Wearables do little to change behaviour

Despite their growing popularity and a burgeoning market, wearable tracking devices aren't likely to change behaviour, according to a report from the University of Pennsylvania.

A tremendous gap exists between recording data and changing behaviour, according to the team, with little evidence to say it could be bridged, or even narrowed, despite increasing popularity.

Authors Mitesh S. Patel and Kevin G. Volpp surveyed 6,223 wearable users and found that more than half of

By the numbers

50%

More than half of the 6,223 wearable users surveyed by researchers at the University of Pennsylvania had given up on their tracking device.

them had ceased to merit that title.

Of the more than 50 percent who had given up on their wearable, two thirds of them had done so within the first six months after

purchasing it.

Patel and Volpp traced these dismal stats to four categories of reasons as to why wearables are failing their customers: price, fatigue of the gadget itself, accuracy in tracking and effectiveness of data reporting methods.

Of price, the researchers say that wearables appeal to those who need them least, for their survey revealed wearable users to be of a young, high-earning demographic who described themselves as early adopters of technology.

Of the gadget itself, the

researchers say the additional steps it implies can be just too bothersome for those who may have a difficult time already.

"To save time spent syncing, charging and connecting, it could be best to stick to smartphones."

They question the accuracy of newer functions in trackers like sleep and heart rate and say devices should take a more direct approach, such as connecting to an actual medicine bottle instead of hiding dosage information in an app. **AFP**



Gadget fatigue and accuracy are among reasons users abandon wearable tracking devices. ISTOCK

Nutri-Bites

Pancakes for dinner — it's a Shrove thing



NUTRI-BITES
Theresa Albert
DHN, RNCP
myfriendinfood.com

Pancake Tuesday! Oh, how I loved it as a kid, and I'm sure my mom did, too — what could be easier than pancakes for supper? But why pancakes, and why on Tuesday?

Shrove Tuesday was turned into Pancake Tuesday by the Brits. Shrove comes from the word "shrive" which is a Christian process of presenting oneself for confession, penance and absolution. It is performed on the day before Lent begins (Ash Wednesday) when some pleasure must be given up for the six-week duration. Originally, that "pleasure" was any form of fat, and so became "Fat Tuesday" or Mardi (Tuesday) Gras (Fat).

And, if you are going to give something up, goes the thinking, you must gorge upon it in advance. So as not to waste, you see. Pancakes use

up all the eggs and butter, so it only makes sense that they would come to represent this holy day. (Not really, but since it's the way things are, let's make the best of it!)

The only trick with pancakes is to make sure the batter isn't too thick and don't pour each one too large to flip. Flip once, only when you see bubbles forming on the top, uncooked side. Oh, and make amends no matter what your faith: You will feel better.

Pancakes don't have to be boring anymore. Here are some new ways to spruce them up:

- Go savoury and spread on some hummus. Then you can slip in a salad.
- Use canned pumpkin and cinnamon in your mix to bump up the vitamin A and fibre. You'll need less sweet stuff on top, too.
- Add nuts to a gluten-free pancake and be super virtuous.
- Top your pancakes with grated parmesan cheese before you flip and make a crispy foundation for fried apples.

- Top wet pancake with crunchy granola and add hemp seeds for more protein before flipping.

For perfect pancakes, keep the batter thin and flip just once when bubbles form on the uncooked side. ISTOCK



This recipe makes four servings. Serve pancakes with fresh berries and your favourite topping. ISTOCK

Coconut makes a pancake that's fibre-rich, yet light

Pancake Tuesday.

Easy, gluten-free protein pancakes stack up to a healthy way to celebrate the day

Coconut flour is not only gluten-free, it is high in fibre and good fat.

Despite its health benefits, you would think it would be dense and heavy like almond flour or others but it is quite light and fluffy.

Ingredients

- 2 egg whites
- 1 cup coconut flour
- 3 whole large eggs
- ¼ cup milk (or alternative)
- Pinch cinnamon
- Coconut oil for frying

It does have a vague coconut taste but that can be disguised if you are one of the few who doesn't enjoy that.

My Nutri-Bites column at left has ideas on how to dress up simple pancakes.

Directions

1. Whisk egg whites in a blender until they are fluffy and no longer liquid.
2. Gently blend in coconut flour on low.
3. Whisk whole eggs, milk and cinnamon together and blend into batter.
4. Thin with more milk one tablespoon at a time until it is the consistency of egg nog.
5. Preheat a pan over

medium high heat and add coconut oil.

6. Pour batter into pan to create 3- to 4-inch disks and cook until you see a few bubbles.
7. Flip once and remove.
8. Continue with remaining batter, wiping pan with coconut oil in between.

THERESA ALBERT IS A FOOD COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST AND TORONTO PERSONAL NUTRITIONIST. SHE IS @THERESAALBERT ON TWITTER AND FOUND DAILY AT MYFRIENDINFOOD.COM

Flatbread mixes Mardi Gras flavour with pizza ease

Directions

1. Heat oven to 500 F. Lightly coat 2 baking sheets with vegetable oil or cooking spray.
2. To make pesto, in a food processor combine roasted red peppers, capers, olive oil and walnuts. Pulse until finely chopped, then transfer to a bowl.
3. To make the olive salad, in the food processor (no need to clean it) combine both olive varieties, cherry peppers, pickled vegetables, garlic, pepper, Italian herbs and red pepper flakes. Pulse until roughly chopped. The pieces should be no bigger than a 1/4 inch.

4. Divide dough into 6 pieces. Stretch or roll dough into long, thin ovals, about 4x9 inches. Arrange dough on prepared baking sheets and allow to rest 10 minutes.
5. If needed, stretch out the dough ovals again. Lightly brush each piece with olive oil. Top each with alternating stripes of pesto and olive salad across the dough, then top with strips of salami and provolone. Bake 6 to 8 minutes, or until the dough is crisp and the flatbreads are lightly browned. Enjoy warm or at room temperature.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ingredients

For the red pepper pesto

- 1/2 cup roughly chopped roasted red peppers, drained and patted dry
- 1 tablespoon capers, rinsed
- 1 tablespoon olive oil, plus extra
- 2 tablespoons toasted walnuts

For the olive salad

- 1/2 cup green olives
- 1/4 cup black olives
- 1/4 cup chopped sweet cherry peppers
- 1/4 cup chopped pickled

vegetables

- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1 teaspoon dried Italian herb blend
- 1/4 teaspoon red pepper flakes

For the flatbreads

- 20-ounce ball pizza dough, room temperature
- 2 1/2 ounces sliced salami, cut into thin strips
- 3 ounces sliced provolone cheese, cut into thin strips

TOP SIX @ 6

Weeknights at 6 Kat counts down the HOTTEST songs of the day

6 Marianas Trench Here's To The Zeroes

5 Rihanna ft Kanye West & Paul McCartney FourFiveSeconds

4 Nick Jonas Jealous

3 Ed Sheeran Thinking Out Loud

2 Pitbull ft Ne-Yo Time of Our Lives

1 Taylor Swift Style

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101.3 THE BOUNCE

Hot Rainmen put Lightning on ice

NBL Canada. Win streak continues as Halifax nails down ninth straight



KRISTEN LIPSCOMBE
kristen.lipscombe@metronews.ca

From hot, sunny Florida to frigid, snowy Nova Scotia, it might take time for a newcomer such as Nigel Dion Spikes to adjust.

But the Halifax Rainmen centre, playing his first game with the NBL Canada club, looked right at home at the on Monday, putting up 10 points en route to a 110-101 win over the London Lightning.

"It's a big difference," the six-foot-eight, 229-pound player from Fort Lauderdale, Fla., said with a chuckle of arriving just over a week ago to some wacky weather. "But I'm adjusting."

While the province's climate has been unpredictable, the Rainmen's performance on the court has become increasingly stable and steady. Monday's game at Scotiabank Centre, pushed back a day due to the latest winter storm, was the Rainmen's sixth straight win.

"Since the first day I got here, these guys welcomed me with open arms," said Spikes, who averaged 4.3 points and 5.2 rebounds with the Marshall Thundering Herd in Huntington, W.V. "It was pretty easy to fit in."

Last week, the Rainmen also signed Douglas Jr. Appiah, a six-foot-one, 175-pound guard from Toronto, who most recently played for the Brampton A's of the NBL's Central Division.



Rainmen point guard Cliff Clinkscales, right, dribbles around London Lightning forward Emmanuel Little, left, and guard Clinton Springer during NBL Canada regular season action Monday afternoon at the Scotiabank Centre.

JEFF HARPER/METRO

Spikes liked the way his team played Monday, minus "a couple of breakdowns."

"But we found a way to get it done," he said.

Several three-pointer helped Halifax to a 33-16 lead after the first quarter, but London slowly started to chip away at the gap as the game wore on.

The fourth was especially nerve-racking, with the Lightning closing to within seven points, but the Rainmen closed it out late with a couple nice

dunks and clutch free-throw shooting.

Power forward Jermaine Dailey scored 15 of his 19 points in the second half to lead the Rainmen and added eight rebounds. Shooting guard Joey Haywood had 18 points and was two-for-three from beyond the arc.

"We wanted to cut their scoring chances down, one basket at a time," Dailey said of how the Rainmen put the Lightning on ice. "We kept fighting."

Up next

The Halifax Rainmen travel Thursday to Charlotte to take on the Island Storm and then host the Mississauga Power at 7 p.m. on Friday. The Rainmen are in second place in the Atlantic Division, with a 16-12 record and four games left in the regular season.

QMJHL. Ehlers looks fine in Herd's .500 weekend

Nikolaj Ehlers made a sweet-heart move Valentine's Day.

The Halifax Mooseheads' leading scorer could have popped it into the empty net, but instead passed the puck over to Samuel Leblanc, who capped off a 3-1 win over the Cape Breton Screaming Eagles on Saturday at the Scotiabank Centre.

Ehlers also assisted Maxime Fortier's tying goal in the second, along with linemate Timo Meier, ensuring the con-

tinuation of point streaks for both import forwards.

Marcus Hinds got it started for the Screaming Eagles, but after falling 6-5 to the Shawinigan Cataractes on Friday, the Moose weren't about to lose another on national television. With it all tied up going into the third, Meier made it 2-1 on a power play.

The Mooseheads travel to Moncton to take on the Wildcats tonight at 7 p.m.

METRO

Scotties. Nova Scotia faces uphill battle in Moose Jaw

Team Nova Scotia has a 2-3 record at the Scotties Tournament of Hearts in Moose Jaw.

Nova Scotia, led by skip Mary-Anne Arsenault, got a split Monday, edging New Brunswick 5-4 and falling 8-4 to Northern Ontario.

On Saturday in Moose Jaw, Sask., Nova Scotia topped Newfoundland and Labrador 12-7. But the provincial rink dropped Sunday's draws, 6-5 to Alberta and 8-7 to Ontario.

METRO



Nova Scotia skip Mary-Anne Arsenault THE CANADIAN PRESS

Mixed martial arts

Kelades downed in Colorado

Cole Harbour kid Chris Kelades came up short in his second-ever UFC appearance Saturday night.

The 33-year-old mixed martial artist fell to Ray Borg of New Mexico in the flyweight division at UFC Fight Night 60 in Broomfield, Colo. Borg won the first two rounds, then took Kelades down with a kimura at 2:56 in the third round.

The bout opened up the main card Valentine's Day.

METRO

AUS men's hockey

Huskies set date with Axemen

The Saint Mary's Huskies face off against the Acadia Axemen next in semifinal Atlantic University Sport men's hockey action.

The Huskies secured their playoff advancement Saturday at the Halifax Forum, where they edged the Université de Moncton Aigles Bleus 3-2 in the third game of a best-of-three quarter-final series.

The semifinals are best-of-five, with third-place Saint Mary's playing Games 1 and 2 against second-place Acadia in Wolfville at 7 p.m. Wednesday and Thursday.

The other series sees the first-place UNB Varsity Reds take on the fourth-place St. Francis Xavier X-Men. METRO

AUS women's hockey

Weather pushes back openers

Puck drop on Atlantic University Sport women's hockey playoffs has been postponed due to the region's extreme weather over the past few days.

The first quarter-final series game between the Dalhousie Tigers and St. Thomas Tommies, originally scheduled for Monday night, is now set for 7 p.m. on Tuesday at the Grant Harvey Centre in Fredericton.

The first game of the quarter-final between the Saint Mary's Huskies and UPEI Panthers, originally scheduled for Tuesday night, will now take place at 7 p.m. on Wednesday at Alumni Arena in Halifax.

METRO

For Leafs' GM, no player is off-limits

Rebuild. After trading Franson, Santorelli to Nashville, Dave Nonis cautions it's not the 'whole roster' for sale

No one is "untouchable" as the Toronto Maple Leafs embark on a rebuilding project that could see a major roster turnover.

General manager Dave Nonis began the deconstruction of the Leafs on Sunday by trading Cody Franson and Mike Santorelli to the Nashville Predators. It's the first move to cash in ahead of the March 2 trade deadline and the first of many that will be made before the 2015-16 Leafs gather for training camp.

"We're going to make moves whenever they come



Maple Leafs general manager Dave Nonis THE CANADIAN PRESS

about that we think can help us," said Nonis, whose future is in doubt with the Leafs headed toward their second straight season without a playoff appearance. "Whether there's a lot more between now and the deadline or not, I really couldn't tell you. It's not like

we're trying to move out our whole roster, that's not the case.

"But if there are deals that will help us to move the team forward, then we would look to do them."

Forwards Daniel Winnik and David Booth, each on a one-year deal, could be traded within the next two weeks, as could veteran centre Olli Jokinen, acquired from Nashville but likely not long for Toronto.

"Our plans with Olli would be to get him playing, get his game to the highest possible level," Nonis said. "I wouldn't be surprised if there are playoff teams that will be calling us before the 2nd to see if we'd move him."

No one's off-limits, Nonis said, with perhaps the exception of impressive 20-year-old defenceman Morgan Rielly.

THE CANADIAN PRESS



Habs edge old rivals in Detroit

Detroit Red Wings left wing Tomas Tatar, left, and Montreal Canadiens right wing Christian Thomas chase the puck Monday night in Detroit. Tomas Plekanec scored with 4:30 left in the third and Max Pacioretty added an empty-net goal with 10 seconds to go to clinch the Habs' 2-0 win. CARLOS OSORIO/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Cycling

Armstrong to pay \$10M in fraud case

An arbitration panel ordered Lance Armstrong and Tailwind Sports Corp. to pay \$10 million in a fraud dispute with a promotions company for what it called "fraud" that covered up his performance-enhancing drugs use. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NHL

Rangers rally twice at Islanders

Kevin Klein scored with 4:32 left, and the New York Rangers overcame a pair of two-goal deficits and netted three third-period goals to stun the New York Islanders 6-5 on Monday night.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

FA Cup

Man U v. Arsenal at quarter-finals

Manchester United had to come from behind to avoid an FA Cup upset at Preston, rallying with three second-half goals to beat the third-tier club 3-1 and reach the quarterfinals against defending champion Arsenal.

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Stuck on 12 Across?
Scan this image with your Metro News app for today's crossword and Sudoku answers. It's OK. No one's watching.

Horoscopes by Sally Brompton

♈ Aries

March 21 - April 20

Remind yourself that what you are anxious about exists solely in your mind and cannot affect you in the world at large.

♉ Taurus

April 21 - May 21

There are times when it pays to be blunt and this is one of them. Others won't mind what kind of language you use today so long as they understand where you are coming from.

♊ Gemini

May 22 - June 21

You will need to keep a cool head today because something is going to happen that has others running in all directions and getting nowhere fast.

♋ Cancer

June 22 - July 23

Ignore your critics. The only mistake you made was letting them know what you were planning. Next time keep it to yourself. You can live without their feedback.

♌ Leo

July 24 - Aug. 23

Even if you are a bit short cash-wise at the moment the planets indicate you will make good your losses over the next few weeks.

♍ Virgo

Aug. 24 - Sept. 23

Someone you love will do something today that makes you realize there is a lot about them you still don't understand. Is that such a bad thing? It keeps your relationship interesting.

♎ Libra

Sept. 24 - Oct. 23

The Sun is about to move into the most hard-working area of your chart but that does not mean you have to do everything yourself. Spread the load over the next few days.

♏ Scorpio

Oct. 24 - Nov. 22

When dealing with people whose motives you are not entirely sure about, make certain what they say and do can't hurt you.

♐ Sagittarius

Nov. 23 - Dec. 21

Minor disagreements could get out of hand today, so promise yourself now that no matter what the provocation might be you won't rise to the bait.

♑ Capricorn

Dec. 22 - Jan. 20

You can blame other people for what has gone wrong but wouldn't it be more honest to look at your own performance first?

♒ Aquarius

Jan. 21 - Feb. 19

It's up to you what you do with your cash, of course, but surely you can find something better to spend it on, something that brings long-term benefits to you and yours.

♓ Pisces

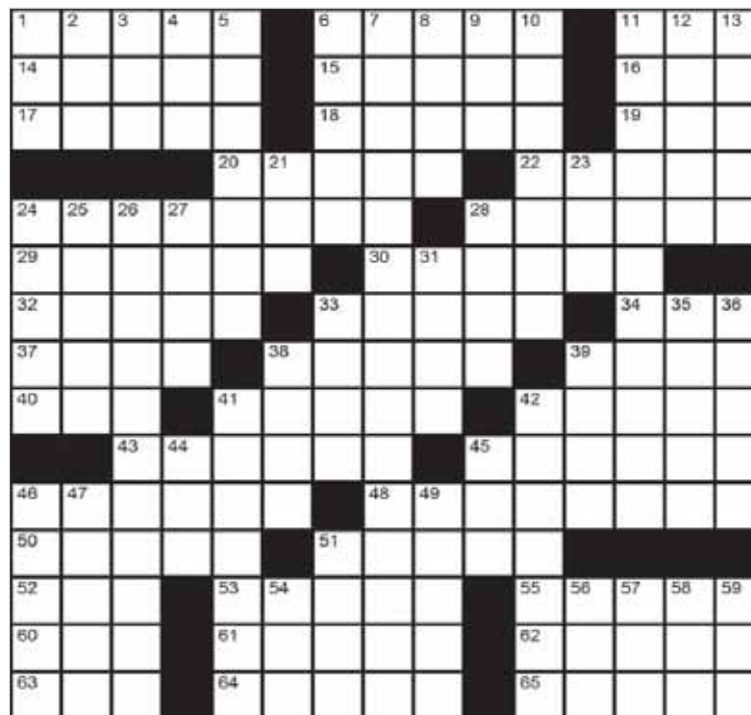
Feb. 20 - March 20

The Sun's move into your sign tomorrow will bring new challenges and new opportunities. Today, rest while you can.

Crossword: Canada Across and Down by Kelly Ann Buchanan

Across

1. Saskatchewan village an hour north of Saskatoon
6. Annul
11. Li'l loudness
14. There ___ '___' in 'Team'
15. Stage
16. Fuss
17. "___ the Moon" (1999) starring Jim Carrey
18. Raring to go
19. Society pages word
20. Academic stretches
22. Accolades
24. Bluegrass song about Tennessee: 2 wds.
28. Compares to
29. "All ___!" (Conductor's call)
30. "Oh My Darling Clementine" bit: "...dwelt ___ forty-niner..."
32. Le ___ d'Arthur (King Arthur work by Sir Thomas Malory)
33. Chills
34. Dyson, e.g.
37. Ink implements
38. Female red deer [pl.]
39. Shakespearean verb
40. Compass pt.
41. Divulges
42. Canadian actor Colm
43. Respite



45. Things growing in Quebec forests
46. Invented-in-Canada baby cereal
48. ___ de soleil (Sunglasses, in French)
50. Some seals
51. ___ -sac
52. 'I love', in Latin
53. Country singer Travis

55. Old Testament figure
60. Prefix to 'political'
61. Poly's materialistic friend?
62. Music genre, ___ Contemporary
63. Western CFL-er, e.g.
64. Mikhail Gorbachev's late wife

65. Dependent
- Down**
1. Boundary, briefly
2. Conductor, ___-Pekka Salonen
3. Heart singer Ms. Wilson
4. Jack of "Barney Miller"
5. Wings' bagpipes hit: "Mull of ___"

6. 'Dum spiro, ___' = 'While I breathe, I hope' in Latin
7. Bubbly glasses: 2 wds.
8. ___ to riches
9. Peer Gynt's mother
10. "Blue Suede Shoes" by Carl ___
11. Toronto-born actress Laura ___ of

- "Bitten" on Space
12. Ancient theatre
13. Windblown silt deposit
21. Flight-leaving info
23. What Tiny Tim played, commonly
24. Highway exits
25. Some woodwinds
26. Newfoundland city: 2 wds.
27. Kit ___ (Some chocolate treats)
28. Untruths
31. Mires
33. River of northern England
35. Bruce Cockburn's "If ___ Falls"
36. Game with Knights
38. Corey of "The Lost Boys" (1987)
39. Money owed
41. Boisterously boast
42. Actor/narrator Morgan
44. Rock supergr.
45. Certain conjunction
46. Suffix meaning 'a thing that devours'
47. Actor, Willie ___
49. Prefix to 'violet'
51. NY Mets ballpark, ___ Field
54. Cape Town's home [acronym]
56. Provincial song: "___ to Newfoundland"
57. Litigate
58. Long ago time
59. Pen

Friday's Crossword



Online

See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers

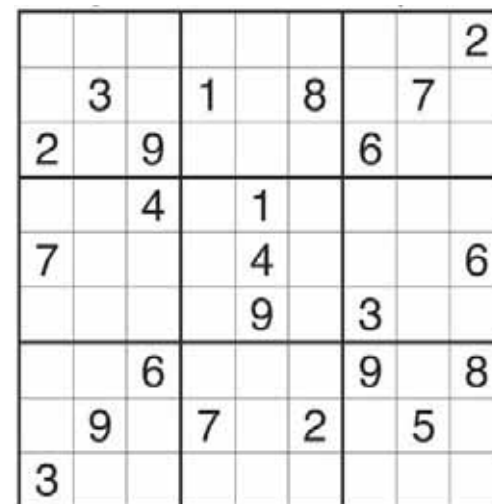


Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

How to play

Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.

Friday's Sudoku



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Tuesday, February 17, 2015



◆ **INSIDE:** Economic forecast for 2015 from mayor, industry experts, plus development, transit, recreation and more



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Not too hot, not too cold

Economic outlook.

Halifax will continue to grow thanks to nicely timed major projects



FRED MORLEY
For Metro

If you aren't optimistic about the 2015 economy in Nova Scotia's capital, you may want to rethink your assumptions.

2014 was the year oil prices and Canada's petro dollar came crashing down to earth. This year, the economies of Newfoundland, Saskatchewan and particularly Alberta will follow suit.

We have become used to Alberta vacuuming up Eastern talent over the last few years. This year, Alberta will be lucky to stay out of recession and the brain drain will likely reverse — at least for a while, as workers who went West learn how fickle resource economies can be.

While the economy of the petro provinces will decline, the rest of Canada will likely grow faster than expected as the combination of a low Canadian dollar and low interest rates boost both manufactured exports and investment. The fact is, the booming United States export market is way more important to the rest of Canada than the Alberta economy.

With the U.S. economy growing fast, the manufacturing sectors of Quebec and Ontario will be carrying the Canadian economy for a while. Nova Scotia's own manufacturing sector and our beleaguered natural resource industries will catch their breath this year and Halifax will continue to grow thanks to nicely timed



Fred Morley, executive vice-president and chief economist of Greater Halifax Partnership, says 2015 will change the face of the city's regional centre.

CONTRIBUTED

major projects and a modest rebound in residential construction.

Halifax will likely be in the top third among Canadian cities in growth this year.

One of the big factors is the start of construction of Arctic Offshore Petrol Ships (AOPS). The AOPS project was signed off early this year and the Halifax Shipyard should be cutting steel by late summer.

The \$500-million convention centre project at the centre of Halifax's downtown will be in full swing in 2015. A number of downtown condo and apartment projects will also kick off this year. Halifax's

downtown has been due for a makeover.

2015 will be the year that changes the face of the city's regional centre.

Even as government cutbacks hit the headlines, job numbers in information technology, financial services, and ocean industries have been quietly growing.

New high wage jobs will boost both residential construction and retail this year and next. A lower dollar should help attract more American tourists. Canadians will also be more disposed to domestic vacations given the effective 30 per cent premium on the U.S.

greenback.

The Halifax economy will see continued improvement in population growth this year as the harsh realities of the Western boom-and-bust economy create a boomerang effect.

Employment gains are likely, although the back-slash of workers from the oil patch may keep labour supply up and unemployment rates around current levels. Our energy sector will not see much decline. Natural gas production should be stable, and new deep-water oil exploration by super majors are committed long-term plays.

Forecasters expect oil prices

to remain depressed for a few years. So it's likely that interest rates and the Canadian dollar will stay low as well. So what we see now will be what we get for the next few years across Canada.

If economies were like nursery rhymes, Calgary would be like the Goose That Laid The Golden Egg — boom and bust. We are more like Goldilocks And The Three Bears. The Halifax economy is never too hot and never too cold. This year, and for the medium term, it will be just right.

FRED MORLEY IS THE EXECUTIVE VICE-PRESIDENT AND CHIEF ECONOMIST, HALIFAX PARTNERSHIP

What's inside



Mayor Mike Savage predicting a good year for Halifax.

Page IH4-1H5



Halifax Transit is moving forward to keep people moving.

Page IH11



Port of Halifax cargo terminals working hard to recapture business.

Page IH14



Halifax preparing to play host to world-class athletes.

Page IH27

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NOVA SCOTIA

HALIFAX

From the mayor's seat

A Q&A with
Halifax Mayor
Mike Savage



RUTH
DAVENPORT
ruth.davenport@metronews.ca

For Halifax's mayor, 2015 could be the year that the city's normally stable economy gets a jolt.

Mike Savage touts the first year of construction at the Irving Shipyards, along with the \$1-billion offshore exploration by BP and Shell that could begin late this year, as two potential catalysts for the city's normally stable economy.

In an interview with Metro Halifax, he also says he and the city's CAO will begin promoting Bridging The Gap — an internship program with the municipality that provides 18 paid positions to new graduates — to other cities and companies in town, trying to create opportunity for new graduates and new Canadians.

He says Halifax, with its educated workforce, diversified economy and vaunted quality of life, has a great brand, and the world is starting to take notice.

Q Looking forward to the end of 2015, how do you imagine Halifax, vis a vis development, economic prosperity, industry, employment?

A I think Halifax is great. I think this is going to be a good year for Halifax — there are a lot of very positive signs on the horizon from an economic development point of view. Obviously, Irving's stuff is going to ramp up significantly, but I think there's going to be some good private sector investment that follows that. The big question mark is oil and gas, whether we'll have any good news on oil or gas. If we do, that could be an impactful piece of work. But I think the end of this year, you're going to see a city that's doing quite well and that's on the right track.

Q What does "on the right track" look like to you?

A I think it looks like two things. One is the

actual statistical, mathematical numbers. Are people working? Is the vacancy rate improving? Are houses selling? But the other track that's equally important to me is what is the mood of the city? What is the feeling of the city? Do people feel confident? If you go back to 2008 in Canada when we had the economic downturn, what you see more and more is the importance of confidence and belief that things are in the right direction, and when they are, people spend money and are comfortable spending money. Those are the two things. I think we'll have good employment. And to further break that down, I think we'll see more young people here. I think there will be more opportunities for new graduates in a number of circumstances — finance, back office IT, growing ocean science cluster and, obviously, shipbuilding will spur more aerospace and defence spending. So I think that those are the things I look for. And on a macro level, over a number of years what I want to see is more people participating in the economy who haven't felt able to participate before, people with disabilities, communities that have traditionally been underrepresented from employment, African Nova Scotian, First Nations, things like that.

Q You mention the statistics, the figures — real GDP, employment, etc. Where does your optimism come from because those figures at the moment don't look stellar for 2015 and even into 2016?

A I think most of the indicators I've seen — the banks and things like that — indicate that Nova Scotia is going to have a better year than it had last year. CMHC, housing starts expected to climb 14 per cent, that should be a very positive increase. Construction of single-detached homes is going to even out after having been down 25 per cent; our housing starts, the number I see



Halifax Mayor Mike Savage sat down with Metro Halifax recently to answer questions about the state of the city. JEFF HARPER/METRO

is 1,500 in 2015, similar into 2016. If you look at construction work happening in our downtown core in particular ... I think that there's a lot of good investments being made. People talk about the (downtown office) vacancy rate, but these are all private sector investments that are being made, which tells me that some people think that there's going to be people looking to buy houses and move into the downtown core in the years to come and businesses as well.

Q For the rest of us looking at these numbers and forecasts, they look better than last year, but they're not where we'd like them to be. Do you have indications of things coming down the pipe that might not be reflected in the stats?

A No, I don't think so. We have access to the same bank projections as everybody else, which seems to me they're much better this year than they have been for a while. I do think that there's going to be some significant

Weekly wage

\$849

The average weekly wage in Halifax, according to the Greater Halifax Partnership's October 2014 Economic Report. The average rose by 2.3 per cent from 2013 to 2014.

private sector job announcements this year in Halifax, which will be very important to the growth of the city. Halifax has always been a fairly stable economy, but now you're taking a stable economy and you're throwing billions of dollars of investment for the Irving Shipbuilding, \$1 billion for BP and Shell, and I think a burgeoning entrepreneurial sector, which could be highlighted by things like Volta Labs, who are looking to be very important in the economy. So I could be off base, I have been before, but I think things are pretty good for Halifax and I hope by extension that Nova Scotia benefits as well because Halifax can't do well on

its own. It only does well as part of a province.

Q You mentioned you see more young people coming to Halifax over the next year. Tell me about those plans, either for you specifically or what you see happening on that front.

A It's no secret — if you look at the job growth in Halifax, from 2002 to 2012, the job growth was in that 35 to 54 range. So there's been job growth, but we haven't been increasing our people who've been working at a young age. A lot of cities are like that. And Halifax hasn't had dramatic out-migration to all parts of Canada. We've lost jobs to specific parts of Canada, like Alberta, Saskatchewan for a while, and even Newfoundland. But all cities want young people. But we have a magnet, we have a head start because we've got the universities. Six universities and a very strong community college. So we have the — I hesitate to call it a trap, but we have the bait. We get

kids here. That's stage No. 1. Stage No. 2 — do they like it here? Yeah, they do. I can tell from having had the benefit of the Mayor's Welcome Reception and going to universities on a regular basis and meeting with the university presidents on a regular basis, students like it when they're here and would like to stay here in a lot of cases. So that's positive. We have this Bridging The Gap program here in Halifax, where last year we hired 18 people to come in as interns into the city, and the last time I met with them ... I asked them, how many of you would like to stay in Halifax? And every hand went up. Every one. So we have kids who come here to go to school. They have a good experience when they're here, they'd like to stay here. Clearly, the big piece is, where are the opportunities? So that's a problem. But it would be a hell of a bigger problem if we didn't have them to begin with, or if we got them here and they couldn't wait to leave.

For more, see page IH5

Continued from IH4

Q I have a lot of friends who ... graduated school, found a job, were able to stay and then you get things that are out of (the mayor's) control like the elimination of the graduate retention rebate, which has been a huge blow for quite a few of those people ... probably about half of them who were in that situation have pulled up and moved elsewhere, specifically because of that. You're on good terms with the premier, is there any input you can have on a decision like that?

A No premier, whether it's Dr. Hamm, Darrell Dexter or Steve McNeil, brings forward a policy that's designed to drive people away. We all want to do the right thing and we all have to balance the books at the same time, so those are the challenges that other levels of government face. I've had many discussions with the premier and his colleagues in cabinet about ways that we can move the ball on things. My focus is on those things where the city has a role to play.

Q But what would you say then to a young person who made their decision. They wanted to stay in Halifax and because of this decision that's not yours to make and out of your control, they say sorry Mr. Mayor, I would love to stay in your city, but I can't hack it, the retention rebate was the last straw.

A Well, hopefully, the goal is that's something that's being replaced with something that will have more impact for more students. I recognize that finances are a big issue, we're all driven by our finances. But I think Halifax is a good place to stay and work and raise a family and do those things and there's many factors that go into that, and people have to make their own decision.



Halifax Regional Police Chief Jean Michel Blais, left, and Mayor Mike Savage lead a group of cyclists along Thistle Street during the second annual Mayors Bike Ride last June. JEFF HARPER/METRO

Q You mentioned the Bridging The Gap program ... are you getting a lot of buy-in from the private sector on similar programs, on getting rid of that "five years experience" requirement?

A I've talked to a number of businesses about it, and some businesses do it now. There's a large company here that has now made Halifax its main office in Canada for finance and some other things, which means 12 to 20 jobs, many of them young graduates. But the CAO and I have talked about the fact that it's time for us to take this Bridging The Gap program and commoditize it to a certain extent and go to people ... we need to take it out and say, this is what we've done. It's worked really well for the city, we encourage you to take this and do your own type of program. Probably not commoditize it, but

Unemployment rate

6.1%

The unemployment rate in January 2015, according to Statistics Canada. The national unemployment rate was 6.6 per cent.

package it up and say this is what we've done. We've never challenged other companies to do it in any official way. That's why Richard (Butts) and I have talked about taking that message more directly to employers. We've talked to companies like Emera and Bell Aliant about it, who are trying to do some of this work now ... so I think there's an appetite to do it, and we can just tell them it's worked for the city.

Q Is there room for expanding that program in

the near future?

A I don't know about expanding it. We can only do a start, and we're not going to go out and spend tons of money on it. The whole idea is that it's part of how you do business. So we started off with 12 the first year, we had 18 the second year. We'll do a review and see where it goes. We don't create a bunch of jobs, put them in and say goodbye. We go to the business units to see where there might be an opportunity and, hopefully, in some cases they'll be integrated. But we're not an employment agency so much as we are an opportunities agency. In this case, of giving people that experience so they can then take that and go out and get a job. In some cases, it may be with the city.

Q You've alluded twice now in this interview to some

Opportunity

"I know that (students) want to see the world, and because they come to Halifax doesn't mean they have to stay here. I just don't want to see them leave because there's no opportunity."

Halifax Mayor Mike Savage

significant job announcements in the private sector. Can you tell me more about those?

A Not really. I hear, I'm sure you hear stories of companies that may be looking to invest here, and I'm always very hopeful.

Q In previous interviews, you've described your job, or part of what you do, as being the ambassador for Halifax, that you travel to conferences and promote Halifax, you're the marketer in chief. What, if anything, has changed in doing that over the last two years in how people respond to you? Are people recognizing the name Halifax for anything in particular?

A I think that Halifax is not the most well-known city in the world, but just like the beer that came from here, those who like it seem to like it a lot. So we just take the message of what Halifax is and it's amazing. I can tell you that in Boston, Norfolk, both places I was towards the end of last year, when you talk about Halifax, people's eyes light up. We're a port city, we're not big, but I truly believe that we hit above our weight. Hugely educated workforce, which is what people are looking for. The biggest growing centres of the world are literally half a world away from us in southeast Asia, but they need avenues to market, and they see Halifax as that potential. I think Halifax is a good brand, we just have to get it out more.

Q You've always been very optimistic about Halifax and its prospects. Is there anything that gives you pause? Cause for concern?

A Snow and ice (everyone laughs, wearily). Is there anything that gives me concern? Of course there is. We're in a province that has a very sluggish economy, where the economic indicators have been on a downward turn for a long period of time. And everything that was discussed in the Ivany Report, we've known, but crystallized, which is that we've got to turn things around as a province. So that causes me concern. Everybody wants to do it, but how do you get there. One of the things that's interesting about Halifax that people don't realize is, Halifax itself is not the typical government town that people might think it is. We've got a pretty diversified economy, which is an advantage, but very stable over the years, which is good when you hit the tough times. I think the advantages we have dramatically outweigh the disadvantages. I think that in the years to come, people are going to be looking for cities that provide a quality of life, a good vibrant downtown with good access to everything that nature has to offer, an educated workforce, a diversified workforce, a community that's got strong clusters in its economy, whether it be aerospace defence, biosciences, finance and back office, shipbuilding. I don't see a lot of weaknesses. We've got a port that's got good potential, more than it's achieved. We're a gateway. I just believe there's a lot of things there that should encourage people, and if we can raise our sights or recognize what's there, believe in it, I'm very optimistic. And that's after two solid weeks of snow and ice and bronchitis. So look, in this country, it's funny, Maple Leaf fans can be optimistic. So if you can be confident in the Maple Leafs, it's all smooth sailing for Halifax.

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Positive outlook



Bruce Gorman, director of Central Library and Regional Services, walks along the top floor of the Halifax Central Library last year. JEFF HARPER/METRO

Business community. Downtown Halifax Business Commission executive director excited about the future of the city

JON
TATTRIE
For Metro

The dazzling new Halifax Central Library attracted 60,000 visitors to Spring Garden Road in the first two

weeks after its December opening and hopes to pull in 900,000 visitors this year.

That's exciting news for Paul MacKinnon, executive director of the Downtown Halifax Business Commission.

"I think what's really

striking is just the feeling of positivity," he said.

And for a business community always fighting to attract people away from the malls and box stores to the downtown core, bringing so many people — especially so

many families — will likely have a spillover effect.

MacKinnon said the waterfront draws families downtown in the summer, as the Halifax Mooseheads and Halifax Oval do in the winter. The library now

brings those families downtown year-round.

Another future draw is the massive new Discovery Centre location at the Nova Scotia Power headquarters on the waterfront. The new version of the centre is slated

to open next summer, which will leave another hole on old Barrington Street.

Once the pride of the downtown, it has struggled for years as big retailers like Doull's books depart and are not replaced. But new life blooms in the form of Obladee wine bar, 2 Doors Down, Stillwell, and the business commission itself.

Also, signs indicate a national retailer plans to open a shop on the street this spring. Urban Outfitters is hiring in Halifax, and is rumoured to be moving into one of the street's high-profile vacancies — the old Sam The Record Man store.

"If you go by and look at the work that Starfish has done in that property, it's a gorgeous building now," MacKinnon said.

One idea for making more out of the vacancies is pop-up stores that would set up shop for weeks or months. But so far landlords have shown reluctance to these ventures.

Expect to see Argyle Street trying new things this year as the city experiments with a shared-street model, where pedestrians are favoured over cars.

Work on the giant convention centre will rumble along in 2015, and should be completed by 2016.

Project. Macdonald Bridge getting the Big Lift

JENNIFER
TAPLIN
For Metro

It's difficult to visualize the finished product now when construction on the Macdonald Bridge is just about to begin.

The massive \$150-million, two-and-a-half-year redecking project, called the Big Lift, is set to begin March 1. The sidewalk and bikeway is coming out at the end of June.

"We really wish we didn't have to remove the bikeway and sidewalk, but, unfortunately, we have no alternative," said Steve Snider, general manager and CEO for the Halifax-Dartmouth Bridge Commission.

Local shops are preparing for disruptions, but Snider said that's something they have dealt with in the past.

In 1998-99, nearby businesses had to deal with the deck replacement of the ap-

proaches to the Macdonald Bridge, he said.

"They understand the impact of overnight closures and weekend closures and what that will do. Unfortunately, that is just a fact. With reduced traffic volumes it will be a challenge for some of the businesses."

But looking past all the coming traffic snarls and shuttles for pedestrians and cyclists, Halifax and Dartmouth will have a sparkly,

renovated bridge that will last many decades.

When finished in 2017, the Macdonald will look more like the MacKay with the steel structure below the road deck instead of above it.

"When the project is complete we'll have a bridge that is renewed. And that's what this project is about, making sure the Macdonald Bridge can provide uninterrupted service to our customers for the next 50 years."



The Macdonald Bridge will undergo redecking in 2015. JEFF HARPER/METRO

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Memorial planning well underway

Halifax Explosion.

Special advisory committee working on vision statement

JENNIFER
TAPLIN
For Metro

It is two years away, but such an important milestone for this city — the 100th anniversary of the Halifax Explosion — deserves careful planning.

Last summer, Regional Council struck a special advisory committee to plan the event, and since August it has met once or twice a month.

Committee vice-chair Dwight Dorey said the committee is taking ideas, collecting historical data and working on a vision statement to guide the planning process.

"I think there's a fairly common view among the committee that it's not going to be a one-off day event. There are going to be things, quite frankly, that could be going on for an extended period of time.



Members of the Halifax Regional Police lay wreaths at the base of the Fort Needham Bell Tower. JEFF HARPER/METRO

It's going to depend a lot on what applications might come forth for funding."

For example, Dorey said there could be an educational component that may extend throughout the school year.

There have been ideas submitted and several tossed around during meetings, but Dorey wouldn't elaborate since it is still very early in the planning process. But one major question for the com-

mittee is how much money will it have to work with.

"We have been advised by city staff that there is going to be a budget for it, but we actually haven't been given a figure yet," Dorey said.

Event planning and funding will likely come together at the same time, he added. Besides municipal funds, there should be grants, and there could be federal and provincial money as well.

Major impact

"I'm a Mi'kmaw person from Millbrook First Nation. The explosion had a major impact on the Mi'kmaw population, particularly in the area of Tufts Cove, and the black community as well as others."

Committee vice-chair Dwight Dorey on why he joined the committee

"Even private money might be available," he said. "That's part of the challenge to anticipate what could happen and how do we help to jell it all together to make something that's going to be of particular interest, not only to the local people here, but nationally and even internationally."

The committee has the 100th anniversary of the sinking of the Titanic, held in 2012, and the 50th and 75th commemorations of the Halifax Explosion to analyze as case studies.



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Portland Street, as well as many other streets in Dartmouth, were closed to vehicles as part of Switch Open Street Sundays in 2013. JEFF HARPER/METRO

Small businesses making big strides in Dartmouth

JENNIFER
TAPLIN
For Metro

Downtown Dartmouth is becoming an incubator of small shops.

Approximately a dozen small businesses have opened in the past year, said Tim Rissesco, executive director of the Downtown Dartmouth Business Commission.

One of the newest kids on the block is Hazelnut & Rose, a store dedicated to soon-to-be and new moms. Owner Genny Shaw said she picked downtown Dartmouth because she found the perfect space, plus she likes the supportive community and revival of small business in the area.

"Everywhere you turn there is an interesting locally-owned shop sprouting up," she said. "We want to be in downtown Dartmouth because we are passionate about local commerce. We want to be a part of the vibrant community of small business owners in the area. We want to be in on the renaissance."

But it's not all easy. Shaw said the biggest challenge is getting the word out. While downtown Dartmouth is on its



A window washer cleans the glass exterior of Belmont House, a commercial office building in Dartmouth, in 2013. ANDREW VAUGHAN/THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

Population growth

- Tim Rissesco, executive director of the Downtown Dartmouth Business Commission, said he predicts 3,000 to 4,000 more people will be living in the downtown Dartmouth area in the next five years.

way, there are still large pockets of the HRM unaware of the shopping opportunities there.

"Add to that a niche mar-

ket like pregnancy/nursing and you have to get creative and smart about how you reach people," she said. "(It's) still a work in progress."

Another hiccup for area businesses is the redecking of the MacDonald Bridge, which starts next month and will last for about a year. There are preparations in place to help with the disruption, but traffic snarls are guaranteed.

"The MacDonald Bridge will be a good thing to have redecked, but we'll see some challenges with that respect," Rissesco said.

Downtown Halifax Business Commission presents the

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Calgary Mayor Naheed Nenshi, Keynote Speaker

Mayor Naheed Nenshi is currently serving his second term and is Calgary's 36th mayor. Prior to becoming mayor, he was Canada's first tenured professor in the field of nonprofit management at Mount Royal University's Bissett School of Business and a trusted business advisor to corporate leaders in Canada and the USA.

Mayor Nenshi's real passion is to make Canada's cities work better. He's the lead author of Building Up: Making Canada's Cities Magnets for Talent and Engines of Development and has long put his ideas to work in Calgary. He holds a Bachelor Commerce Degree (with distinction) from the University of Calgary and a Master in Public Policy from the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, where he studied as a Kennedy Fellow.

For more information, visit downtownhalifax.ca
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Infrastructure. New post-secondary projects on the way

JENNIFER
TAPLIN
For Metro

Universities and colleges are constantly changing. Many of the city's post-secondary institutions have recently cut ribbons on new infrastructure and renovations while several new projects are on the way.

A unique building is opening in May at Mount Saint Vincent University: The Margaret Norrie McCain Centre for Teaching, Learning and Research.

"The new four-floor, 49,600-square-foot and environmentally conscious McCain Centre will make possible a learning environment that is contemporary, technologically rich and interactive," said Brian Jessop, vice president of administration at Mount Saint Vincent University.

He added it will be the first building on a Canadian university campus dedicated to the advancement of women.

NSCAD received a \$3-million donation last summer and applied it to improving their historic downtown campus they've been occupying since the '70s, said Marilyn Smulders, NSCAD director of communications.



Mount Saint Vincent University
STEPHANIE TAYLOR/METRO

"NSCAD now has architectural design proposals to consider for changes to the student lounge, library, Duke Street entrance and the Anna Leonowens Gallery," Smulders said. "The work is expected to be completed by September 2016."

There's a lot of activity at Dalhousie where a new Collaborative Health Education Building is currently under construction. The university is also working with HRM on a renewal of University Avenue, said Nathan Rogers, assistant director of Capital Planning Facilities Management. He called it a "major civic project that will eventually benefit the entire corridor and focus travel along the primary university spine and away from nearby residential neighbourhoods."

Dal is also planning to expand and renovate the Student Union Building and will start construction on a new fitness centre on South Street in the fall.

NSCC just added 6,800 square feet to the front of the Akerley Campus, making room for a new library, student commons, and a better public entrance.

"Students and staff are already talking about other ways they can use this space, such as offering lunchtime programming and functions throughout the year," said NSCC's director of facilities and engineering Daniel Kelly.

"In the fall, a bakery and café, run by tourism management and culinary arts students, will open in this space. It will be an extension of the student-run restaurant, Fresh Twenty One."



The sign at the entrance for Cole Harbour. JEFF HARPER/METRO

HRM suburbs booming

GISELLE MELANSON
TATTIRIE
For Metro

HRM's suburbs have experienced more growth than expected over the last 10 years. Stantec's 2013 Quantifying Study indicates that suburbs in HRM had grown by 56 per cent since the 2006 Regional Plan was released, compared to the Plan's forecast of 50 per cent suburban growth.

Whether they're single young professionals, growing families, or empty-nesters, it seems that more people are making the move to the suburbs in search of green space and better proximity to transit.

"Bedford South, Bedford West, the Hammonds Plains/

Tantallon areas are growing pretty much as fast as they can build the houses," said Bedford-Wentworth Coun. Tim Outhit.

Outhit noticed that while retirees tend to go for the suburban apartment or condo and growing families gravitate toward larger properties, what they all want is green space. "The kind of neighborhoods we're building these days are so much more walkable and come with sidewalks and walking trails and quite often bike lines, so it's a mixture of wanting a bigger yard in some cases, but often it's just that they like the fact that they can go out and walk on trails."

Outhit also cites proximity to transit as a growing priority. "...people have made it clear

that they don't all want to live on the peninsula; they don't all want to live downtown. And what I'm hearing is that they're not looking for us to widen roads, they're not looking so much to put in the extra lanes — but they are looking for better public transit, including express buses, rails, ferries, etc.," Outhit said.

Royal LePage Atlantic Real Estate Agent, Paula Langille, has noticed that popular suburban areas for her clients as of late include Clayton Park, Bedford, Sackville, and Tantallon.

"New developments close to schools and golf courses are also popular — for example the Parks of West Bedford and Brunello Estates is an up-and-coming neighbourhood.

Design standards

"Suburban areas have enjoyed enormous prosperity and growth over the past several decades. Because this growth is expected to continue we need to focus on improving community design standards. New design standards will lead to more attractive and sustainable 'green' communities and will result in more beautiful, walkable and complete communities." (Planhrmblog.ca)

Amenities they're looking for are grocery stores, restaurants, proximity to trails, lakes, and transit."

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A look into the future of HRM transit

Planning ahead. From rebrands to technology, many changes coming to area transit

**GISELLE MELANSON
TATTRIE**
For Metro

As part of the municipality's rebranding initiative, Metro Transit has been redubbed Halifax Transit — and we can expect more changes to our city's transit system over the next few years.

Some of these changes include: The new Lacewood terminal; two new replacement harbor ferries; and new technologies to improve real-time bus location; audio-visual accessibility; and fare payment.

Currently under construction, the new Lacewood Transit Terminal, located next to the Canada Games Centre, is expected to open this summer.

Halifax Transit hopes to make the same improvements to the Lacewood Transit Terminal that were made to the new Bridge Terminal that opened in 2012, and bring increased safety, accessibility, and comfort to transit users.

Also this summer, ferry pas-

sengers can expect to travel on one of two new replacement vessels currently being built for Halifax Transit.

The second replacement ferry is expected to arrive by summer 2016. The vessels are expected to increase efficiency in Halifax Transit's ferry service, which is the oldest continuous salt-water passenger ferry service in North America.

By spring 2016, passengers can expect to have access to real-time information on the location of their bus thanks to Halifax Transit's new Automated Vehicle Location (AVL) Technologies.

Some of the technology updates will include the ability to plan trips and an interactive voice response phone system.

By fall 2016, each of the 300 buses in Halifax Transit's fleet is also expected to be equipped with an audiovisual system that will integrate with the AVL system to automatically announce upcoming stops.

By 2017, Halifax Transit will introduce a new fare management system that makes fare payment more convenient for passengers. The system is expected to integrate smartcard technology to facilitate fare payment. For more information on Halifax Transit changes, visit halifax.ca/transit.



Mayor Mike Savage, left, jokes around with Eddie Robar during a Halifax Transit funding announcement last year. JEFF HARPER/METRO

Moving Forward Together

- Halifax Transit has undergone a comprehensive overhaul to bring forth the Moving Forward Together Plan: A proposed network redesign based on feedback from residents given during the fall 2013 community consultation.
- The five-year plan will be released on Feb. 17 and accompanied by public engagement activities and stakeholder briefings both online and around the city.

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Making it easier to cycle in HRM

Transportation. New bike lanes among upcoming changes

**GISELLE MELANSON
TATTIE**
For Metro

HRM has some changes underway in its cycling infrastructure that it hopes will encourage more residents to choose a healthy, sustainable mode of transportation.

Cyclists can expect to see the addition of two new greenways this year, and potentially expect to see the implementation of protected bicycle lanes over the next four years.

Dave Hubley, manager of project design and planning with HRM, says the Highfield Greenway, which has been approved and tendered, "will connect two pieces of active transportation infrastructure that the municipality has constructed over the past few years." Those pieces are the pedestrian bike bridge over Highway 111 and the trail par-



A cyclist travels along Bayers Road under a blanket of fall leaves last fall. JEFF HARPER/METRO

allel to Burnside Drive from that bridge to Commodore.

A multi-use trail, the Highfield Greenway will replace the sidewalk on the Dartmouth side of the bridge and transport cyclists to the local street network (Leaman Drive).

Also slated for construction this year is the St. Pat's

Greenway, which will connect the end of the Windsor Street Bike Lane to an existing popular bicycle route on Vernon Street, via the back of the former St. Pat's High property.

Protected bike lanes have also been proposed in the 2014-19 Halifax Active Transportation Priorities Plan, how-

ever, details are pending the development of the 2015/16 capital program. Pressure in recent years on the city to build protected bike lanes has come from such groups as The Halifax Cycling Coalition, which has started the On Track for 2020 campaign encouraging the city to build 100 kilometres of protected

bike lanes by 2020.

Not all cyclists consider protected bike lanes a priority for HRM, however. Roger Nelson, owner of Halifax Cycles Inc. reasons that segregated lanes, while ideal, also require the most development and resources.

Instead, Nelson proposes a different priority for HRM's

Hollis Street bike lane

- As part of the downtown street conversion project, the Hollis Street bike lane is also expected to be completed in 2015.
- Developed through public consultation and recommended by HRMbyDesign, the Hollis Street bike lane will run on the west side of the street from just south of Cogswell Street to South Street.

cycling infrastructure.

"The thing that could happen overnight and cost the least would be a 30 kilometre-per-hour speed limit on the peninsula. This could be modified to maybe streets of a certain traffic volume within the whole of HRM. But when you slow the cars down 40 per cent, it changes the way the streets feel like you wouldn't believe while having very little effect (on) commuter times," he said.

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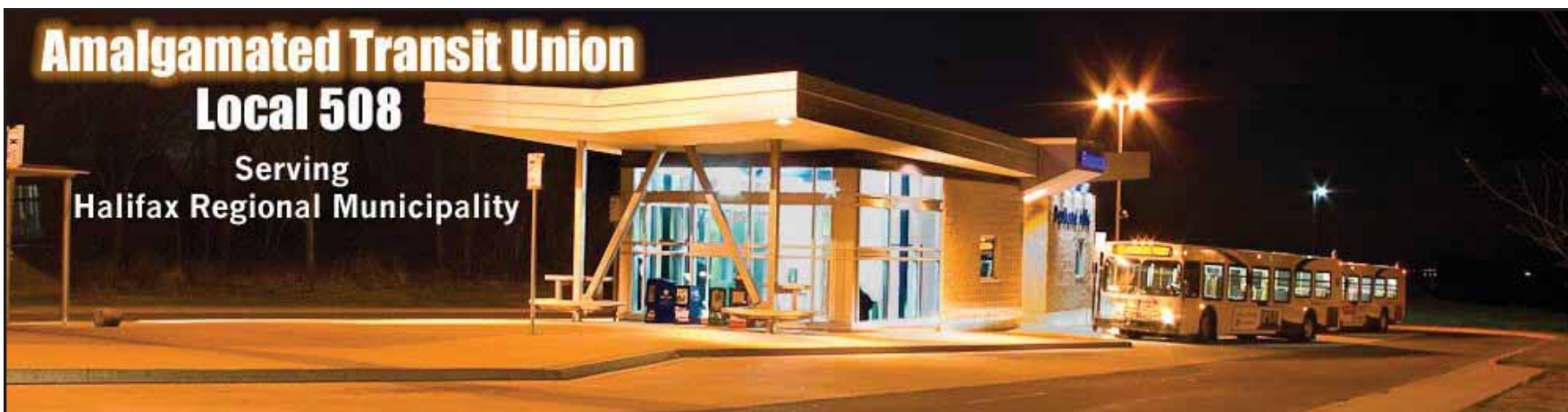
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Port of Halifax a key driver: Report

Economic recovery.

Recent report shows cargo terminals working hard to recapture business

JENNIFER
TAPLIN
For Metro

Economic recovery. That's what Port of Halifax sees coming out of a recent economic impact report regarding container activity.

Between 2008 and 2013, container traffic grew 14.2 per cent.

"The two cargo terminals have been working tremendously hard since 2007, that recession time, to recapture the business," said Lane Farguson, Port of Halifax spokesman.

Farguson also points to the port's efforts at diversification in cruise, real estate and the Seaport Market.

He said this report shows those efforts are pay-



Port of Halifax. METRO FILE

ing off. In 2013, the year which was examined in the

report, the Port of Halifax was worth over \$1.6 billion

to the Atlantic Canadian economy. Compared to the last report which detailed the Port's output in 2007, before the recession, it's a growth of \$82 million.

The Port took over managing the Seaport Market in late 2012.

In 2013, about 898,170 tourists and locals perused the stalls. On average, they spent \$25 per person at the market and another \$20 at nearby shops.

As a whole, the Seaport Market saw sales of over \$22 million while nearby businesses raked in over \$18 million.

"I think it's fair to say everyone was pleasantly surprised by the impact of the market not just in Halifax but across Nova Scotia

Quoted

"We've been building momentum year after year. It's interesting because we tend to talk about the same part of port-related activity whether it's containers or cruise, but what this report shows is that the Port of Halifax is so much more than just one piece of business."

Karen Oldfield, President and CEO, Halifax Port Authority

as well," Farguson said. "A lot of the market vendors aren't from Halifax but from mainland Nova Scotia so the money they're making here in sales, is money they put back into their business and generally it goes to benefit communities."

The market is in the

final year of three-year capital improvement plan, Farguson said.

He added the Port is also looking at how to spread out the customer traffic throughout the week. Sundays are coming along nicely, he said, so they're focusing their efforts particularly on Fridays.

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A house for sale in Halifax. JEFF HARPER/METRO



Cheaper mortgage rates may be enough to stimulate the real estate market this season. SHUTTERSTOCK

Housing market could be heating up after cool 2014

JENNIFER
TAPLIN
For Metro

Selling houses in HRM was rough going for many homeowners last season, but this spring could be a different story.

In January, the Bank of Canada cut the overnight lending interest rate to 0.75 per cent, making mortgage rates attractive for first time homebuyers.

"I think it's pretty exciting because the cost of borrowing is the lowest it's been for a number of years," said Dartmouth mortgage broker Clinton Wilkins. "It should really light a fire for first time homebuyers."

Even though home prices aren't dropping very much, cheap mortgage rates may be enough to help stimulate the

real estate market this season.

But there are no guarantees. Rates have been low for the past five years and Wilkins said he's worried many borrowers and buyers have become complacent.

"I think they're so used to the rates being low, rates going even lower wasn't a huge surprise even though it should be because in our lifetimes this is the lowest it's ever been," Wilkins said. "And it's probably the lowest it will ever be because at the end of the day, the interest rates can't be zero."

In the first half of 2014, the local real estate market was the slowest it has been in a decade.

But Dave Uloth, president of the Nova Scotia Association of Realtors, said it started to pick up for the second part of 2014 and forecasts for 2015 are call-

Check out these hoods

Uloth said these are the areas with the most activity:

- Fairview
- Downtown Dartmouth to Burnside
- Hants County East
- Halifax West
- Halifax County East

ing for a 2.6 per cent growth.

"It is a buyers market for the moment but I don't think you'll see it stay a buyers market for a long period of time," he said.

With dropping oil prices, Uloth said he expects some people will be returning from work in Alberta with cash in their pocket for a down payment.

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A large group of new Canadians get sworn in during a citizenship ceremony in Dartmouth last October.

JEFF HARPER/METRO

More immigrants needed, says mayor

'We need more people.'
Halifax grew by only 0.4 per cent over previous year, report shows

JON
TATTRIE
For Metro

Halifax's mayor says the city needs to attract and retain immigrants to thrive, but the city hit an eight-year low for newcomers in 2013.

"I think it's pretty simple, really. You either believe we need more people or you don't," Mike Savage said. "We have the room to attract more people and we have a history of people who have come to Halifax and created wealth for themselves, their families and for other people. I think we need more people. We're going to look different in the years to come, and I think that's a good

thing."

According to the Greater Halifax Partnership's Halifax Index 2014, "The biggest challenge we face as a community is hanging on to our new graduates and attracting immigrants."

The report found Halifax's population grew by just 0.4 per cent over the previous year, placing it bottom of the table for benchmark cities. Since 2000, about half of Halifax's population growth has come from international immigration.

On the positive side, work from organizations like Immigration Services of Nova Scotia has helped dramatically increase the province's ability to retain immigrants. A few years ago, 60 per cent of immigrants left Halifax; today, 30 per cent leave.

"A lot of it is the approach we take: Whether we throw out the welcome mat or the caution mat," Savage said.

He wants to extend the municipal vote to Halifax residents who aren't Canadian citizens. Council approved the idea just before Christmas, and now Savage is talking to the province about the legal changes required to make it happen.

Savage, whose father immigrated to Nova Scotia from the U.K., said he understands that some people think such a move would devalue citizenship. Others, he said, think attracting more immigrants means creating more competition for scarce jobs.

"I think that's an outdated mentality. We know from the history of immigrants to Nova Scotia that they create jobs for everybody."

Halifax hosts 5,000 international students every year, a number that has more than doubled since 2008. Savage said convincing more of them to stay after graduation is an obvious way to grow the population.

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Huge demand for indoor playground

GISELLE MELANSON
TATTRIE
For Metro

When indoor playground, hop! skip! jump! first opened its doors in the fall, they found themselves having to shut them on certain occasions when the facility reached its capacity of 250.

Although hop! skip! jump! owners spent more than a year on market analysis prior to opening, they still had to hit the soft, multi-coloured ground running in order to meet the huge demand for Nova Scotia's largest indoor playground.

"The resources needed to operate the initial facility design was four employees, but now we have 11 employees onboard to cover the whole week working hours," said co-owner, Mohamed Naim.

Hop! skip! jump! also accommodated its wild

popularity with flexibility; listening to feedback from customers on their Facebook page and taking suggestions on such things as gift certificate denominations for the holidays.

While the pitter-patter of small foot traffic has never been a problem for hop! skip! jump!, Naim says there are still challenges to starting a new business in Halifax and cites operating expenses and financial support as the two main ones.

"The existing government leasehold improvement loan is very limited in the amount," Naim said.

Operational expenses are not insignificant considering the sheer size of hop! skip! jump! — the facility, located at 10-100 Susie Lake Cres., is 10,400 square feet in total.

That includes a 3,500 square foot, three-level, multi-coloured play struc-

ture; three birthday party rooms, a café, and a lounge area where parents can keep any eye on their kids.

If parents prefer a more hands-on approach, the play structure has been built to support adults in addition to kids, and features a variety of attractions, including a spider climbing tower, slides, palm tree swings, a ball blaster, and a zero-gravity ball pool. There's also a special section for toddlers, featuring a carousel, trampoline, and merry-go-round.

As for the future, hop! skip! jump! has plans to expand even more.

"We will continue working on the business development cycle to achieve the best in business standards and new programs and ideas will be added frequently. This will help us to expand the business and then transfer the business to a franchise model," Naim said.



Kids and their parents enjoy hop! skip! jump! on its opening day last year. JEFF HARPER/METRO

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FOR BOOTH AND EVENT INFORMATION

Downtown Halifax still a hub for conferences

JENNIFER
TAPLIN
For Metro

Nurses, trekkies, scientists. They'll all be hosting conferences in Halifax in 2015.

While conferences are booking in the new Halifax Convention Centre for 2017, 2015 is proving to be a very busy year at the old digs at the World Trade and Convention Centre.

"We've got a lot of national conferences coming in this year," said Scott Ferguson, president and CEO of Trade Centre Ltd.

The Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions, the Workplace Health and Safety Conference, and the Canadian Medical Association are just a few.

"These are all conferences that are connected to very strong sectors in Halifax," Ferguson said.

He calls downtown Halifax a "campus setting." He said whether visitors are in town for a hockey tournament or an accountants conference they feel welcome here.

Quoted

"I think Halifax has a special opportunity here. We talk about what we don't do well in this province... and I think it's about time we really look at the things we do well and we do well in the event bucket."

Scott Ferguson, president and CEO of Trade Centre Ltd.

"The same principles apply when you host a world curling championship or you host a world conference of bio-magnetic engineering and we do those things exceptionally well in this city," he said. "It may not be considered (big) from an events perspective but if you look at it, it's a platform to draw in some of the top innovators from around the world into the market place for innovation, investment and research."



Members of the ScotianAires barbershop chorus entertain guests at a Halifax Convention Centre event. They will be attending the Harmony Inc conference in 2017, hosted at the new venue. JEFF HARPER/METRO

Conference schedule

Some of the conferences coming to the World Trade and Convention Centre in 2015:

- The Atlantic Security Conference April 16-17
- Canadian Conference on Electrical and Computer Engineering May 3-6
- Administrative Sciences Association of Canada June 13-16
- 9th Symposium of the International Society for Digital Earth Oct. 5-9
- Hal-Con, Oct. 30-Nov.1
- Unmanned Systems Canada Nov. 3 - 5

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Sarah McLachlan plays to a capacity crowd at the Scotiabank Centre. JEFF HARPER/METRO



Gene Simmons, left, and Paul Stanley of KISS rock out to over 8,000 fans at the Halifax Metro Centre. JEFF HARPER/METRO

Concerts are at 'all time high'

Major festivals. More announcements to come

JENNIFER
TAPLIN
For Metro

An avalanche of vibrant live music is needed to shake Halifax out of the snow this winter.

Good thing there's plenty on the way: Bryan Adams, Counting Crows, and The Tra-

gically Hip, just to name a few.

"Right now we're at an all time high, not only in event activity and marquee events, but in diversity of events," said Scott Ferguson, president and CEO of Trade Centre Limited (TCL).

He added Halifax is becoming one of the top events destination cities in the country "pound for pound."

Joel Plaskett, Weird Al Yankovic, Journey, Colin James,

Tom Cochrane, Sloan, and many others will be playing this spring and summer at various locations in HRM. The summer concert lineup is starting to take shape with more announcements coming, but there also are several huge, multi-day events garnering a lot of excitement. Halifax is home to this year's Canadian Country Music Association Awards in September.

"Performers haven't been

announced yet, but that is a big, big deal," Ferguson said.

And for the first time, Halifax will host both the men and women AUS Basketball Championship together later this month. The Men CIS University Cup will follow soon after.

And in March, the best male curlers will be in town for the Ford World Men's Curling Championship.

"We have a very strong curling following and reputation,

Plus Tattoo, Stars on Ice

Don't forget the old dependable events like the Royal Nova Scotia International Tattoo and

Stars on Ice which still draw thousands of people to the city each year, Ferguson said.

and we've always wanted to host the world championship and we have that this year," Ferguson said. "That's going to be a big deal, not just for the facility, but for the region."

Halifax is also getting a reputation for hosting world-class volleyball. The Canadian senior men's team will play Argentina at the Scotiabank Centre in June.

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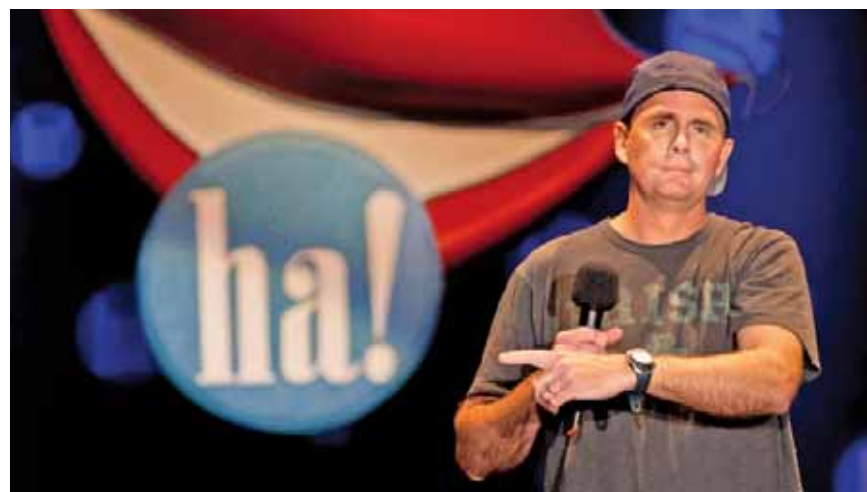
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Comedian Bob Marley hosts the Opening Gala of the Halifax Comedy Festival at Casino Nova Scotia's Schooner Showroom in 2013. JEFF HARPER/METRO

Festivals that come to Halifax

Beat winter blahs.
ComedyFest poised for a few laughs in April

JENNIFER
TAPLIN
For Metro

Summer doesn't matter: Festivals and events are finding great success in the middle of winter or early spring.

The Savour Food and Wine Festival has already started and runs until March 5. It began well over a decade ago as a one-day event and has since expanded into a month-long festival attracting well over 1,500 people.

There are several reasons why February is home to this culinary showcase said Joe McGuinness, festival organizer and restaurant owner.

"It's generally a slower time of the year in the restaurant business," he said. "In February, people are over Christmas, generally speaking they're probably suffering from cabin fever having been cooped up for the month of January."

The main attractions are a chocolate, wine and cheese event, a cocktail event, the Savour Food and Wine Show at the Cunard Centre, and a wine tasting.

Any disadvantages to a February festival? "Of course," McGuinness said. "It's called snow."

But luckily they have never cancelled an event due to snow storms.



Sackville's Nikki Payne performs at the Halifax Comedy Festival. JEFF HARPER/METRO

Also, some of the bountiful produce chefs might want to showcase isn't available in the depths of winter.

"But there's no way you could do this in the heights of summer when the restaurants are in full tilt."

In its 20 years, the Halifax ComedyFest has tried out a few different spots in the calendar but found a permanent home in April.

"Comedy is a hard sell in the summer because people are out," said Kim Hendrickson, an organizer of the Halifax ComedyFest.

"People are in town and we figured they would be tired of winter and looking forward to a few laughs and get out and do something.

Halifax ComedyFest

32 comedians in 14 shows over four days, and they usually sell out.

5-6 thousand people are expected to attend.

We've remained in April for about 15 years."

The only disadvantage is they're not able to tap into the tourist market but Hendrickson said it all balances out.

"If we were attracting tourists in the summer we would be losing local people going off on their own vacations," she said.

Plenty of visitors expected to boost tourism numbers

Destination. Cruise ship guests projected to climb; tournaments and festivals poised

JON TATTIRIE
For Metro

Last year saw fewer cruise ship passengers docked in Halifax, but the industry is confident that "blip" will be reversed in 2015.

Halifax welcomed more than 217,000 passengers on 134 vessels between May and November, down from 252,121 passengers in 2013. Lane Farguson, of the Halifax Port Authority, said the dip was largely due to new laws on emissions.

"But now we're getting past that and we're getting back into a more regular cycle as a result. It was more of a blip," he said. "We are looking at an increase in the range of 10 per cent year-over-year."

That would bring numbers back up to 2012 levels. Farguson points to a recent Port Authority report on economic impact, which found the cruise ship market brings in \$104.3 million to the provincial economy.

Overall, Nova Scotia drew 1.8 million visitors in 2014. The return of the Maine-Nova Scotia ferry got credit for a 19-per-cent increase in visitors from New England.

That contributed to a 17 per cent rise in hotel bookings on the Yarmouth and Acadian shores.

Across the province, the number of rooms sold increased by three per cent compared to 2013.

Halifax saw a four per cent rise in bookings. Those bookings brought in \$266 million in revenues, \$11 million more than in 2013.

Lynn Ledwidge, director of marketing for Destination Halifax, said it was a good year for tourism.

"The numbers across the province were relatively strong for 2014," she said.

For 2015, she said the annual roster of tourism attractions will keep the city



Cruise ships head into Halifax Harbour last September. JEFF HARPER/METRO



A group enjoys the sunshine on the roof of the Halifax Seaport Market next to the Maasdam. JEFF HARPER/METRO



People board a Harbour Hopper near the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic as another one leaves for a tour of the city. JEFF HARPER/METRO

busy. "And in March, we've got the Ford World Men's Curling Championship," she said. The event runs March 28 to April 5 and marks the first time Nova Scotia has hosted the tournament.

"It should bring national exposure to the region, possibly leading to an increase

in visitors over the summer. "In September, there's another new activity that we're getting excited about, and that's the Canadian Country Music Week," she said.

Like Farguson, she's confident 2015 will be another healthy year for the tourism sector.

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LGBT. Since 2006, Halifax Pride momentum continues

JENNIFER
TAPLIN
For Metro

It started out with an idea: Sell Halifax to LGBT tourists.

In 2006, a Halifax Pride organizer brought the idea to Destination Halifax, the city's tourism marketing engine.

Lynn Ledwidge, director of marketing with Destination Halifax, wanted to gauge if the city was ready for this niche audience and put on an LGBT marketing workshop for members.

"We knew immediately that we were onto something when 55 businesses attended that first workshop, that's pretty significant," she said.

From then it snowballed with more workshops, targeted advertisements, and connections with big players like Travel Gay Canada and the International Gay Lesbian Travel Association.

"We've never looked back. It's been very, very positive," Ledwidge said.

Lynn Iling, board member of the Halifax LGBT Business

No-brainer strategy

"I certainly don't see us pulling back on our efforts to promote Halifax as a welcoming destination."

Lynn Ledwidge
Director of marketing, Destination Halifax

Association, said many LGBT travellers conduct thorough research before heading out on vacation. They're checking out community events, attractions and which restaurants and hotels are friendly to the community.

"I would say Halifax is doing a pretty decent job. I mean, there's always room for improvement for sure but I have seen reference to LGBT stuff in local papers and even the booklet in hotels have reference to LGBT stuff going on," she said. "It's definitely visible here."

While selling Halifax to the travelling LGBT community is considered a success, pegging down actual statistics of LGBT

travellers is difficult, Ledwidge said.

"If we're asking through our hotel partners to identify the travelling audience as an LGBT traveller, that just doesn't work," she said. "We can't place an expectation on any of our industry suppliers to tell us this percentage of travellers are LGBT travellers. How would you know?"

They can gauge interest through hits on their Facebook page and the Rainbow Halifax page on the Destination Halifax website. It provides a number of links and a listing of local hotels approved by the Travel Alternatives Group (TAG) and Travel Gay Canada, and information for anyone wanting to get married while they're here.

This coming tourist season, a number of ads urging LGBT tourists to visit Halifax will appear particularly in Boston and Toronto.

"Just to be present in the Boston market is important to us to build awareness as a gay welcoming destination," Ledwidge said.



A reveller takes in the festivities at a Halifax Pride event in this file photo. METRO FILE



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A Halifax Recreation worker resurfaces the ice at the Emera Oval prior to opening last year. JEFF HARPER/METRO

What a jump. Rink generating more interest in speed skating

JENNIFER
TAPLIN
For Metro

It was love at first skate four years ago between the people of Halifax and their Emera Oval.

And while everyone of all skating abilities has kept the love alive over the years, speed skating in particular has blossomed thanks to that polished oval of ice on the Halifax Common.

Brad Holwell, president of the Halifax Regional Speed Skating Club, said they get a couple of requests every week to join their organization.

"The exposure is certainly amazing," he said.

Before the oval, the club would gain the occasional new member after someone stumbled on the sport. Now speed skaters are a frequent presence in downtown Halifax and more and more people are trying it out.

The adventurous can rent long blades from the trailer to give it a spin, and there are speed skating races every Sunday.

Location, location, location

"In the future, I don't think the interest will decrease for the oval. I think people are still not totally aware that speed skating exists and they're able to train with a club in the area. I see it increasing for sure and the oval being in the centre of the city is a big part of that."

Brad Holwell, president of the Halifax Regional Speed Skating Club

Thanks to the oval, many experienced club members, some who have suffered concussions from short track, have been able to make the switch to long track and still pursue their passion.

"It's certainly been a benefit for many of our skaters because some of them don't like the close, cramped quarters of the short track competition so they enjoy the long track."

In national competitions,

the Atlantic provinces used to place well behind the pack. That's changing.

In the 2011 Canada Winter Games hosted in Halifax, the home province had five athletes in short track and three in long track.

But in the 2015 Canada Winter Games happening now in Prince George, B.C., Nova Scotia is represented by five athletes on the short track and seven on the long track.

"It's been the long track that's developed more," said Todd Landon, long track coach for the Canadian Sport Centre Atlantic and regional

development mentor for Speed Skating Canada.

He expects the results to be different this time around as well.

He said four years ago, there were two bell curves: The main bell curve of athletes from all the other provinces, then in the back another for the Atlantic skaters.

"They were so far beyond where the massive group of skaters was. Going into these games now, I don't expect them to be another blip; I expect all the skaters to be under the same bell curve, and a couple of them to be towards the front of it."

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The Canadian sports dream

Game on! Halifax playing host to many beloved Canuck sports in coming months, such as hockey, curling, and basketball events

RICHARD WOODBURY
For Metro

If people are looking for a reason to get out of the house during what remains of the cold winter months, they've got lots of great sports options.

Most immediately, the Subway Atlantic University Sport (AUS) Basketball Championships is taking place at the Scotiabank Centre Feb. 26 to March 1. For the first time ever, the event is for both the men's and women's teams.

In the past, the way the national championships were scheduled did not allow for this, says Phil Currie, AUS's executive director.

He says this year's format means many fans won't have to choose between deciding whether to attend games for

the men's or women's team of their favourite university.

"This provides our fans an opportunity to take in both in one venue, over the course of a few days," said Currie.

Just two weeks later, the Canadian Interuniversity Sport (CIS) University Cup, the national men's university hockey championship, is also happening at the Scotiabank Centre. St. FX is the host team and two other Atlantic university teams will be taking part in the eight-team tournament, so there will be plenty of teams with local roots to cheer on.

"It's just pure, hard hitting, fast hockey," said Currie.

The CIS University Cup is taking place March 12 to 15.

For curling fans, the Ford World Men's Curling Championship will be a must-see event. The best curlers from

Men's volleyball

- Halifax is one of the host cities of the 2015 International Federation of Volleyball (FIVB) World League. As part of that, Canada's national senior men's team will play against Argentina on June 5 and 6 at the Scotiabank Centre. Fans will be treated to some of the best indoor volleyball in the world.

around the world will hit the sheets March 28 to April 5 at the Scotiabank Centre. Some of the 12 countries being represented at the event are Canada, Scotland, and Sweden.

Besides all of these great events, both the Halifax Mooseheads and Halifax Rainmen are having good seasons and are in the final stretches of their season, with the playoffs set to happen in short order.



Canada's Kevin Koe, centre, releases the stone as his teammates Nolan Thiessen, left, and Carter Rycroft sweep the path during their match against Japan at the 2014 World Men's Curling Championship held in Beijing in March 2014. ALEXANDER F. YUAN/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



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Halifax boxer is 2-0

Custio Clayton. Getting into the pro ring is going well for Dartmouth native in first 2 fights

RICHARD WOODBURY
For Metro

Custio Clayton's pro boxing career has got off to a knockout of a start. In his second fight, held in late January, Clayton knocked out his opponent less than a minute into the first round. The victory improved his record to 2-0.

Hometown pride

"Hopefully, one day I can bring the title back home."

Custio Clayton, pro boxer

The 27-year-old Dartmouth native had a decorated amateur career and

was a six-time Canadian national champion. For his

pro career, Clayton signed with Quebec-based promoter Groupe Yvon Michel.

"Things are going really good," said Clayton in a telephone interview from Montreal, where he now lives and trains.

The adjustment to fighting as a professional hasn't been too difficult. He attributes this in part to rule changes which meant he fought some amateur bouts without headgear, so there was no learning curve when fighting without headgear as a pro.

Clayton says fighting professionally allows for a different approach.

"You can set up what you're doing," he said.

As a pro, there are more rounds in a match, so fight-

ers have time to let their fight strategy take effect.

Clayton's training regimen has him training two to three times a day, working on things such as strength, cardio, and of course, boxing.

As of right now, Clayton's third fight is scheduled for April, but he says something might come up between now and then.

He hopes to someday soon have a fight in Nova Scotia.

As a pro, Clayton has been fighting as a super welterweight, meaning the maximum weight for the class is 154 pounds. Another option for him is to fight as a welterweight, which has a 147-pound limit.

"I feel comfortable either

Bilingual

Now living and training in Montreal, Custio Clayton is starting to pick up the French language. However, his promoters are arranging for some tutoring to help Clayton learn the official language faster. This is a wise move, given Quebec is a hotbed of boxing in Canada.

way," said Clayton.

Clayton's eyes are firmly set on winning a title, but there is definitely one thing he'd like to do with that title.

"Hopefully, one day I can bring the title back home," he said.



Boxer Custio Clayton at the 2014 Commonwealth Games in Glasgow, Scotland, last year. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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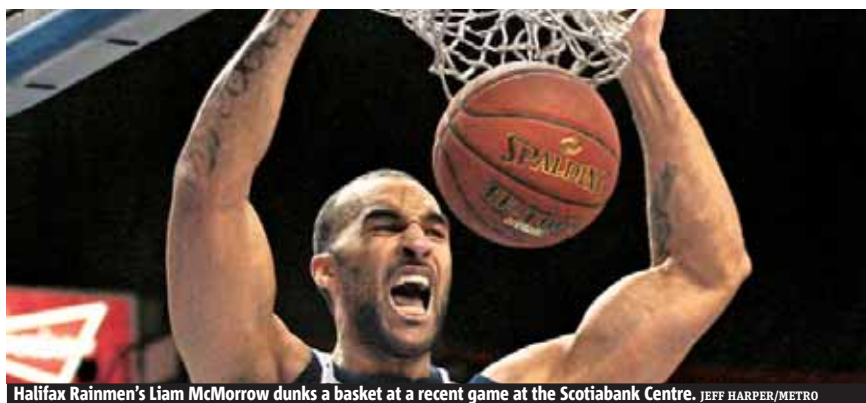
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Halifax Rainmen's Liam McMorrow dunks a basket at a recent game at the Scotiabank Centre. JEFF HARPER/METRO



Halifax Rainmen's Joey Haywood, left, screams as he tries to get around Island Storm's Avery Smith during NBL regular season action at the Scotiabank Centre. JEFF HARPER/METRO

Rainmen ready for late-season b-ball run

For the fans. Increased buzz surrounding team this year with attendance up 45 per cent

RICHARD WOODBURY
For Metro

Heading into the final stretch of the season, the Halifax Rainmen find themselves playing .500 ball, but have a few things working in their favour, one of which includes solid coaching.

"It starts with our leader and Pep is our leader," said team owner Andre Levingston.

By Pep, he's referring to head coach Joseph (Pep) Claros. Claros previously coached the team during the team's 2011-12 season where it came as close as it ever has to winning a championship, losing to the London Lightning in the finals.

With Claros at the helm, Levingston says the Rainmen are always prepared, play with intensity, and never giving up.

"Pep hates to lose. Our team mirrors him," he said.

The return of Claros had another benefit — it's helped attract more fans. Levingston said when the announcement was made in August that Claros would be the coach, there was a noticeable increase in ticket sales.

Home game attendance is up 45 per cent over last year, with the team drawing close to 3,000 fans per game, said

Record-setting player

The Halifax Rainmen recently added point guard Cashmere Wright to the roster. He played in the U.S. for the University of Cincinnati, where he set a school record for having 198 steals over his career. Professionally, he has also played in the Netherlands.

Levingston. Even during the Christmas holidays, which is a tough time of year to draw fans, attendance was around 2,000 per game, he said.

One of the criticisms of past teams was that there was too much roster turnover. Levingston says this year's team has made the fewest moves of any team in the league.

"We have a group of guys that have great chemistry, both on and off the court," said Levingston.

Levingston said that any players brought in must be able to fit in with that, adding the team has been doing a great deal of due diligence when deciding whether to add a specific player.

Levingston is confident the team will make a strong late-season run.

"We're excited about the type of basketball we're playing this year," he said.



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Mooseheads. Skating down the stretch

RICHARD
WOODBURY
For Metro

Oftentimes in major junior hockey, when a team trades away some of its star veteran players before the trading deadline, it's an indication the team is looking to the future.

While the Halifax Mooseheads made some major moves before the Jan. 6 deadline and stockpiled a boatload of picks for the future, the way the team is playing shows it isn't going anywhere without a fight.

"It (the trades) helped us pick up some good, young hockey players and draft picks that will help our team moving forward, but at the same time, we remain competitive," said general manager Cam Russell.

Russell said the team has showed steady progression throughout the year, and despite being hit early on with injuries, the team with a record above .500 is coming into its own.

Second-year players like



The Halifax Mooseheads bench celebrates Cavan Fitzgerald's shootout goal after a win over the Drummondville Voltigeurs during recent QMJHL regular-season action at the Scotiabank Centre. The team is coming into its own as the regular-season winds down. JEFF HARPER/METRO

Nikolaj Ehlers and Timo Meier have been particularly impressive, providing a huge offensive spark to the team.

"Those are world-class players," Russell said.

The general manager is also pleased with the growth

of the team's younger players. Rookie netminder Kevin Resop has been one pleasant surprise. The 17-year-old

from Florida stepped into the No. 1 spot because goalie Eric Brassard is out with an injury. Brassard came to the Moose-

Future dividends

- The Halifax Mooseheads made two trades before the Jan. 6 deadline. The trade that may pay the biggest future dividends was the deal that sent goalie Zach Fucale, defenceman Matt Murphy and a fifth-round pick in this year's draft to the Quebec Remparts. In return, the Mooseheads received goaltender Eric Brassard, and will get Quebec's first- and third-round picks in the 2016 draft, as well as first- and second-round picks in 2018.

heads as part of a December trade that included shipping goalie Zach Fucale to the Quebec Remparts.

Russell said Resop has a great work ethic, is very mature and has worked hard on honing his craft with Mooseheads goaltending coach Eric Raymond.

"We're very excited about his progression," Russell said.

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